The Open Championship

Lehman shows he has Lytham

David Davies at Lytham

FIFTEEN months ago Tom Lehman was under the surgeon's knife for cancer of the colon. On Sunday, at Royal Lytham St Annes, he became the champion golfer of the year, as the Royal and Ancient quaintly calls the man who becomes Open champion. Lehman, who had led by six shots overnight from Nick Faldo, eventually won by two from Mark McCumber and Ernie Els, with Faldo fourth, three behind the winner.

The champion's final round of 73, two over par, was good enough for a 271 total, bettering that of Severiano Ballesteros, who won the last Open here in 1988, by two shots. It followed his course record-breaking card of 64 on Saturday, which saw him approach the final 18 holes with a total of 198, or 15 under, itself an Open record.

Afterwards Lehman, whose first major title earned him £200,000, admitted that "it was not pretty but it was gritty. It was a struggle. I didn't play well. I had no rhythm but I stuck it out and I came through." He also admitted that the crowd's welcome as he walked the final fairway gave him "tingles up and down my spine and tears in my eyes".

It was a great effort from a man who, a week after the 1995 Masters, was operated on for cancer. He was out of golf for a month, finished 14th in his first tournament back on tour and won the Colonial National Invitational in his second.

The final round was perceived by almost all the crowd as matchplay between Lehman and Faldo even though the Englishman was only one ahead of Mark Brooks and Vijay Singh and two ahead of Els and Fred Couples.

David Leadbetter, who had supervised the final Faldo practice session, had found nothing to criticise or change. "He just needs a few early putts. The first six to seven holes are crucial."

Meanwhile Lehman was standing over a 4ft par-putt at the 1st. "You don't want these so soon," said Leadbetter, "but of course they're great if you hole them." Lehman did.

At the 2nd Faldo hit a great approach putt which finished two inches away and was tapped in. But tap-ins were not what he wanted; putts had to go in and pressure had to be applied.

The first sign of a Faldo breakthrough came at the 3rd where Lehman, for some reason, chose a club off the tee that would propel him far enough to reach the fairway bunker. His ball duly dived in, up against the face. "Go in the bunker," shouted a spectator as the ball was in flight, followed by some apparently embarrassed tee-heeing when it did.

The crowd was unashamedly jingoistic but a hole later, after a good shot to the 4th green, a lone voice called out "Come on Tom Lehman" and there was a burst of supporting applause.


Lehman celebrates after his final putt PHOTOGRAPH: TOM JENKINS

Back in the bunker Lehman had no shot and did well to regain the fairway. Now Faldo had an important second shot. If he could get it close and get a birdie three, it would probably be a two-shot swing. But from the moment he struck it Faldo was anxious.

Halfway into its flight he urged it "go on" and then again, more strongly, "go on". It was to no avail. The ball trickled off the green and although he picked up one shot it was a chance missed.

The 4th saw Faldo pick up another shot, this time with a 12ft birdie putt. The crowd erupted but there was no obvious emotion from Faldo, his face remained expressionless and the only acknowledgment of the near hysteria was a brief wave of the hand.

Now he needed to press home his advantage, particularly at the par fives, the 6th and 7th, with birdies at least. But, after lipping out from 6ft at the short 5th, he missed from 3ft at the next and 6ft again at the next. It was desperately poor putting and illustrated the tension in the match. It also meant that Lehman survived a shaky patch of his own; he birdied none of the holes either.

By now it was apparent that the rest of the field were not content to leave it to Faldo to challenge. Couples had five birdies on the way out and moved past the Englishman; Brooks, McCumber and Els all moved alongside and for a while the South African moved clearly into second.

He took on the challenge of the 13th — play short of the bunkers or carry them — and his drive finished pin-high at this 342yd hole. That took him to 12 under and he hit a wonderful second to the 15th which almost went in for an eagle as it rolled 3ft past the hole. Now 13 under, he was only two behind Lehman and two ahead of Faldo, with the birdie chance of the 16th to come.

The hole is only 357 yards but one must at all costs avoid the bunkers. Els drove into one, had to chop out and 13 under became 12 under. Worse, he drove into another bunker on the 18th, another no-go area, another automatic bogey and he had run out of holes on 11 under. Lehman had a three-shot lead with three to play, when it might have been only one shot.

Faldo's last realistic chance of challenging disappeared into a fairway bunker at the 15th, dropping him back from 11 under to 10. Lehman himself dropped a shot at the 17th, when he found an awful lie in a bunker off the tee. But he rescued a five for a two-stroke margin on the 18th tee — enough in the circumstances.

Cryptic crossword by Orlando

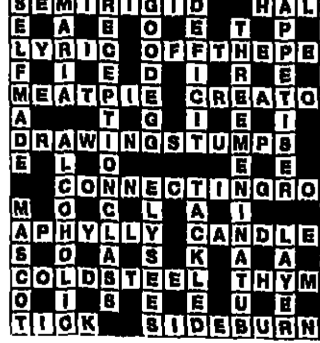
Across

4 Preserve a road report that's false (6)
6 Greek poem about Irish assembly that is extremely honest (3, 5)
9 Little Tommy's grub? (6)
10 Stern dynasty preparing for war again? (8)
11 Instinctive response of good German with reference to battle (3, 8)
15 An Asian city managed to make progress (7)
17 English trees? Humbug! (7)
18 Mountaineer's scrambling list (11)
22 Lone Royalist in disguise (8)
23 Champ with his heart in a German city (6)
24 Outrageous jingoism? (8)
25 Father taking others out for a meal (6)

Down

1 Cheeses, we hear, in cooler (6)
2 It looks ill (3, 4, 3)
3 Creating new fruit (8)
4 Class act in play, say, or end of play (8)
5 It can be addictive in a French city, love can (8)
7 One attempt in the same place (4)
8 Accommodation for squad's last soldier sent back to second front (4)
12 Agree payment for acting together (10)
13 Church based initially on a rock-forming mineral (8)
14 Consumer magazine about end of migration thanks returning bird (8)
16 A piece of music that's finished — true composition (8)
19 Sharpness shown by a copper getting in the last word in prayer (6)
20 From sofa to settle? (2, 2)
21 Changeable island (4)

Last week's solution



Cycling Tour de France

Denmark turns out for Riis

William Fotheringham in Paris

ASKED what he expected to see when the Tour arrived on the Champs-Elysées, Bjarne Riis, who on Sunday became the first Dane to win the world's biggest cycle race, replied: "All Denmark will be there, apart from two people: the queen and one border guard."

He was not far wrong. Coaches with DK numberplates lined the back streets off the world's finest boulevard after disgorging an estimated 50,000 fans, a fair turnout for a country of only 5 million people. Among the crowd were the Danish ambassador to France and the Danish minister of sport.

Some 10,000 red-and-white Danish flags were handed out by the embassy; five Royal Guard drummers added to the celebration of what a journalist from Riis's local paper, Jyllands Posten, said was "the biggest sports result this country has ever known".

Even before this, Riis's successes in the French race had made cycling Denmark's fastest-growing sport. A million will turn out to watch him in the country's national tour next month.

A quiet man on and off the bike, whose major interests outside cycling are said to be collecting French wines and records by singer Roger Whittaker, Riis is loved for his modesty and the patriotism he showed in returning home twice to contest the national championship, winning both times. But he lives in Luxembourg.

His only sticky moment came in Saturday's 39-mile time-trial. Clearly having a bad day, he was at one point losing time to his second-placed Telekom colleague Jan Ullrich at a disastrous rate. But Riis held on and Ullrich's bold ride ensured that team-mates finished one-two for the first time since 1986.

That crowned a dream Tour for Telekom, who also won five stages and took the green points jersey with their sprinter Erik Zabel, who was fifth in Sunday's final charge down the Champs, won by Italy's Fabio Baldato.

The abiding image of this Tour will remain Riis's jutting jaw, agonised face and shining pate during the two attacks that won him the race, in the mountain-top finishes at Sestrieres in Italy and Hautacam in the Pyrenees.

"He deserves this victory for the way he has gone out and taken it at the hardest points of the race," was how the five-times winner Bernard Hinault saw it.

William Fotheringham is features editor of Cycling Weekly

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Indonesia cracks down on unrest

Nick Cumming-Bruce in Jakarta

SMOKE and flames rose over the Jakarta skyline at the weekend as angry mobs smashed or burnt government offices, banks, businesses and vehicles in a violent explosion of resentment against President Suharto's 30-year old rule.

Several hundred troops and riot police lost control of a densely populated quarter of central Jakarta to demonstrators angered by a police-led assault on the headquarters of the Indonesian Democratic Party (PDI), driving out followers of popular opposition leader Megawati Sukarnoputri. One person is understood to have died falling from a burning building and up to 50 people are thought to have been injured in a day of cat-and-mouse battles between security forces and crowds of predominantly young protesters.

On Saturday night, the agriculture ministry was a raging inferno of flame and a two-storey military property had been gutted by fire.

Violence erupted when lorry-loads of police and men dressed in the red T-shirts of the PDI, purporting to be members of a rival faction of the party but widely thought to be members of the security services, launched a fierce assault on Megawati's followers in the PDI headquarters.

The operation was the culmination of a prolonged but clumsy manoeuvre by the army to replace Megawati, daughter of the late President Sukarno, as party chairman with a less threatening leader. Her removal at a special congress failed to disperse her followers.

Crowds quickly formed around police lines, chanting "Victory for Megawati". Then protesters screamed "The army kills, the army are killers" at troops. After a heavy volley of rocks rained on the soldiers, reinforcements moved in on the crowds, severely beating anyone who failed to get out of their path, and leaving numerous victims bleeding in the street.

Indonesian troops and police swiftly broke up anti-government demonstrations on Sunday to prevent a repeat of the riots, but flickering protest indicated defiant opposition towards President Suharto.

Disturbances have so far been confined to the capital, and the authorities will be watching carefully for signs of protest in other cities.

Megawati expressed regret about the rioting, blamed criminals for the destruction, and appealed to her followers to stay calm. An aide said the popular leader has no plans to hold rallies and will concentrate on a court action challenging the legality of an army-organised PDI congress that removed her as party chairman.

Comment, page 10
Family business, page 12

Terror casts shadow over Olympics

John Duncan in Atlanta and Ian Katz in New York

FBI investigators said on Tuesday they were closing in on the terrorist who detonated a bomb in Atlanta's Centennial Park at the weekend as officials scrambled to explain why a warning received by emergency operators never reached the park where thousands of revellers were attending a rock concert.

The blast, which sent nails and screws flying into the crowd, killed an American woman, and a Turkish cameraman died of a heart attack as he rushed to the scene. More than 100 people were injured.

FBI sources said the pipe-bomb was more sophisticated than initially thought, but that agents were still concentrating on the theory that a local terrorist was responsible.

As the Games continued and attendances at most events remained high, President Clinton hailed athletes and spectators for showing "that they would not be intimidated". He invited congressional leaders to the White House to discuss expanding wiretapping and chemically "tagging" explosives to help crack down on terrorism.

Atlanta's mayor, Bill Campbell, said investigators were hoping to identify the Olympic bomber from television footage of the explosion and videos taken by surveillance cameras.

The knapsack containing the bomb was, coincidentally, spotted by a policeman minutes before it exploded. Agents were moving people away when the blast occurred.

The city's police chief, Beverley Harvard, said that an officer was dispatched to "secure" the payphone used to give a warning before the information was passed to a unit that co-ordinated responses to bomb threats.


Locals help victims minutes after the explosion in Centennial Park PHOTOGRAPH: TETSUJI ASANO

She said the warning reached the unit at about the time the bomb exploded, but insisted police could not have responded quicker because the warning was not sufficiently specific. "The caller only stated that there was a bomb in the park with no location at all, and basically said you have 30 minutes."

A sombre International Olympic Committee president, Juan Antonio Samaranch, said he was impressed with the efforts of security forces in the moments before the blast and satisfied that the Games security was tight. "We are very grateful to the authorities for their excellent response and for the security measures they have taken," he said.

Media speculation about the identity of the bomber has focused on America's shady network of so-called militia groups. Two members of a local rightwing group were charged in April with plotting a bombing campaign, though Olympic organisers denied that the two had planned to target the Games.

A spokesman for the self-styled "112th Regiment Militia-at-Large for the Republic of Georgia" insisted that the group had no connection with the attack. "We want to say that we had nothing whatsoever to do with this and we hope that whoever did this is caught as soon as possible," JJ Johnson said.

"History leads me to believe we'll make an arrest," said David Tubbs, the FBI agent leading the investigators, who believe a "white American man" planted the device.

Richard Jewell, the security guard who noticed the bag containing the bomb, recalled someone he had seen at the site who resembled a drawing on an FBI list.

Two French TV stations broadcast composite sketches of a man and woman the FBI were said to have linked to the bombing. Mr Tubbs said that the depicted individuals were not yet considered suspects.

Investigators appealed to people who were near the lighting tower in the park to contact them. Mr Tubbs said his agents had received more than 900 leads.

● Prosecutors have charged eight militia members, after FBI agents swooped on two groups learning how to make explosive devices at a "bomb-making class" on an industrial estate. The FBI said it recovered pipe-bombs and two home-made machine guns when agents raided the class in Bellingham, Washington, approximately 80 miles north of Seattle. Three other suspects were also arrested.

Comment, pages 10-11
Washington Post, page 13

China raises hopes for test ban treaty

Owen Bennett-Jones in Geneva

THE final session of negotiations on a comprehensive nuclear test ban treaty started in Geneva this week immediately after a Chinese underground test, and amid fears that China and India could block consensus on the current draft text.

Sha Zukang, China's chief negotiator, arrived in Geneva saying other delegations should not be disconcerted by Beijing's decision to conduct a nuclear test hours before the talks restarted. "They should welcome it, because China's testing is now over," he said.

Immediately after the test, Beijing announced it would join the other four declared nuclear powers in abiding by a voluntary moratorium on nuclear testing.

The United States voiced its regret over the nuclear test, but welcomed China's announcement that it will now abide by the moratorium.

China is trying to limit the right of other countries to order on-site inspections when there is a suspicion that a test has been carried out in violation of the treaty.

The US, Russia, France and Britain say they are ready to sign an agreement without further negotiations. They fear that if China re-opens one aspect of the draft text, then everyone else will want to discuss parts of the treaty with which they are dissatisfied.

India is making it increasingly clear it is prepared to block the treaty and thereby force negotiations to continue indefinitely. The Indians say the draft text does not contain firm commitments to the global elimination of nuclear weapons.

The big five nuclear powers have resisted any suggestion that they should commit themselves to the elimination of nuclear weapons within a fixed time-scale.

India is also concerned about the so-called entry into force provision, which has been backed by Britain, Russia and China. This states that the treaty will not become binding until a specified list of countries, including India, signs it.

"This is totally, absolutely unprecedented in international law and it's unacceptable to us," said Arundhati Ghose, the Indian ambassador.

India fears that if everyone else signs, then pressure will grow for New Delhi to join so the treaty can become internationally binding.

Austria	AS30	Malta	45c
Belgium	BF75	Netherlands	G 4.75
Denmark	DK16	Norway	NK 16
Finland	FM 10	Portugal	E300
France	FF 13	Saudi Arabia	SR 6.50
Germany	DM 4	Spain	P 300
Greece	DR 400	Sweden	SK 19
Italy	L 3,000	Switzerland	SF 3.30

The BBC belongs to the people, not to managers

I AM prompted to write by Andrew Culf's article (No concessions by Birt . . ., July 21). I wonder if it has occurred to Bland and Birt that it is not they who own the BBC, it is the people of Britain — and the millions of people all over the world who admire, need and love the BBC World Service. Indeed, it is for many their only source of unbiased, accurate and extremely interesting news, not to mention science, literary and music programmes. Having worked for the United Nations in more than 20 countries, I can assure Birt and Bland that no one from the Andes to the Himalayas is in the least interested in the type of domestic news programmes put out by national BBC. For those who want news about Britain, the World Service beams us Britain Today.

It appears to me, my family, colleagues and friends that an example of the highest professionalism, a rare example of excellence, is to be destroyed by inanely arrogant, bureaucratic, penny-pinching administrators who are totally lacking in qualities of leadership.
Diana de Marco,
Todi, Umbria, Italy

A FRIGHTENING reminder of Britain's increasing isolation is the recent move to cut back on the World Service broadcasts. To those of us who have chosen to live and work abroad, it serves not only as a lifeline to good, international broadcasting standards but it also reminds listeners that Britain is not the defensive, corporate country as portrayed by other international broadcasters.

Britain's reputation is leaning towards that of a nation uninterested and ignorant of foreign cultures. If independent, well-balanced quality journalism is put in jeopardy by the kind of management that supports Noel's House Party, the influence and impact of the World Service, and consequentially Britain, will be dramatically affected.
Susanna Kemp,
Higher Education Support Program,
Budapest, Hungary

THE importance of the BBC World Service for those campaigning for democracy in Africa was illustrated to me when I visited Malawi as a member of an international trade union delegation in 1992, in the days of the repressive Banda dictatorship.

Delegation members from Canada, Norway and the US were introduced, without comment, to the prime minister, John Tembo, probably the most feared person in Malawi. When I was introduced, Tembo launched a tirade of abuse about the World Service which, he said, was endangering the stability of Malawi by spreading propaganda about the Banda regime. His outburst demonstrated the important part played by the World Service in the fight for democracy in the absence of a free press.
Annie Watson,
London

IN 1988, while working for Help the Aged, I spent several weeks in Latin America. After completing an assignment in Peru, I spent a few days visiting the surrounding Inca sites with a young local guide. His English was almost faultless. I asked him where he had studied our language. "The BBC World Service," he replied. "I listen ever day."
Diane Trembath,
London



ETA strategy is sectarian too

JOHN HOOPER (Copy cat terrorists of the Costa Dorada, July 28) is not altogether accurate in distinguishing the Basque conflict from the Northern Irish as lacking a sectarian element. As he points out, ETA's attacks on some Basque (rather than non-Basque) targets is a recent development — a response to Herri Batasuna's abject failure to expand or even maintain their support within the Basque country — and negatively confirms that in general ETA's enemy has been defined as "Spanish".

Hooper doesn't mention the most striking difference, however. There is no coherent argument whatsoever confirming that the Basque country is systematically denied democratic rights by the post-Franco Spanish state.

Not only does Euzkadi have a high degree of autonomy, but along with Catalunya it is the richest region in Spain — not exactly a traditional indicator of oppression. Unlike the Basque country, Northern Ireland is an intrinsically sectarian creation, and northern nationalists are still systematically discriminated against as even official social statistics confirm.
Jack Fox,
Mojácar, Almeria, Spain

THE reaction to the bomb explosions in Spain is interesting. Quite properly the mood of the Spanish authorities and British holidaymakers was that the bombing would not affect tourism unduly as most people are unwilling to bow to the threat of terrorism. Contrast that to the reaction of tourist chiefs and government in Northern Ireland. The tourists were leaving in droves, they said; every statement was more negative than the last. One would be forgiven for believing that the scaremongers were working for the Spanish tourist board.
William Montgomery,
Bangor Branch, Democratic Unionist Party, Belfast

Le Monde, page 17

Keep up the fight against Trident

WELL said, the eminent 12 who signed the letter against retaining Trident (July 21). It is appalling that £40 billion may be wasted. I look with pride at New Zealand's saner attitude towards nuclear weapons.

Militarily, New Zealand now stands apart from Britain and its other traditional allies. Ever since 1989, when the government enacted a Bill to make New Zealand nuclear free, this split has widened. It was apparent when New Zealand sent its attorney-general to the World Court to argue the illegality of nuclear weapons. Our traditional allies had not even wanted the matter brought before the court. Again there was a divergence of opinion when New Zealand protested strongly against France for testing nuclear devices in the Pacific, and Britain concurred with the French. More recently, since the World Court gave its opinion on the illegality of nuclear weapons, Britain's response has been negative, whereas in New Zealand the opinion was seized upon with relief and hope.

These are exciting concepts — far better than the prospect of wasting billions on Trident.
Dick Reynolds,
Christchurch, New Zealand

THE ruling from the International Court of Justice on the illegality of the threat or use of nuclear weapons is not as the Guardian Weekly reports "disappointing" for anti-nuclear campaigners (International Court fudges nuclear arms ruling, July 14). While the Court could not determine whether or not the threat or use of nuclear weapons is illegal in every circumstance, it did rule that such threat or use is "generally illegal".

The only circumstance on which the Court was undecided was in the "extreme circumstance of self-defence in which the very survival of a State would be at stake", and even then the rules of humanitarian law would apply. In addition, the Court ruled that the nuclear armed States have "an obligation to pursue in good faith and bring to a conclusion negotiations leading to nuclear disarmament in all its aspects".
Alyn Ware,
The Lawyers' Committee on Nuclear Policy, New York, USA

INDEED, the Trident is a nuclear waste, according to Tony Benn and fellow MPs. Thank God for commonsense!

But danger could still lie ahead in the light of the position adopted by the International Court of Justice. While the court ruled that the use of nuclear weapons would "generally" be unlawful, it was undecided on whether nuclear weapons could be used in self-defence. History shows that wars always start with grand declarations of national interests, security and self-defence.
Henk Hout,
Sydney, Australia

Roots of the Dhahran bomb

EXCEPT for David Hirst's article (Dangers of supping with the Americans, July 7), which spotlights Washington's Middle East double standards, Guardian Weekly reports on the Dhahran bombing have barely scratched the surface of processes at work in Saudi Arabia.

Scores of sources testify to the vehemently repressive, anti-democratic and corrupt regime. Riyadh continues to pump out cheap oil for the West while its revenue keeps the Saudi rulers at play and bankrolls the US military, with a fraction allocated to the people. Little wonder that marginalised opposition groups, denied any parliamentary channel, should strike using their only realistic political medium — violence.

Also worthy of analysis is the possibility that the same people responsible for the Dhahran bomb were themselves nurtured by the US in the fifties and sixties. The enemy of the day then was Nasserism, so the CIA helped set up anti-socialist Islamic groups throughout the Middle East, including in Saudi Arabia and especially around Dhahran.
Neil Solomon,
Massawa, Eritrea

Briefly

I DON'T think there's anything wrong in giving the death sentence for selling women; I don't think it's a lesser crime than murder, rape and assault, as Francis Deron thinks it is (China speeds up rate of executions, June 30). I think men who regard women in the same terms as cattle cannot be rehabilitated.

I don't know if we are actually seeing an improvement in the rights of women in China, or if the government has its own reasons for handing out these penalties. What we are seeing is women still being regarded as a commodity. Ironically, when girl babies were undesirable they were killed or abandoned; now, because that same chauvinistic attitude has put them in short supply, women become profitable.
Ann Ashley,
Vancouver, Canada

EVERY now and then, perhaps during the "silly season", the Guardian Weekly rolls out the old chestnut of student howlers (Student clangers, July 21). Haven't people realised yet that these are the free spirits, the non-conformists, the anarchists of school and examination rooms, protesting at the system which chops up knowledge, force-feeds them with it, and expects them to regurgitate it as required by teacher or examiner.
Chris Wright,
Castelo Branco, Portugal

I CAN understand the Americans in their parochial befuddlement, being convinced that the rest of the world must follow US foreign policy and bow to US law. But one thing about the Helms-Burton Act on trade with Cuba has not yet been explained. To which branch of the Mafia do they want expropriated Cuban property returned?
John Newlove,
Ottawa, Canada

JUST catching up with a back issue but I have to differ that Pat Buchanan has "argued" the rejection of globalisation. Perhaps we could invent a verb "demagogued".
Chris Roberts,
Deptford, New Jersey, USA

YOUR leader (Filling a moral vacuum, July 14) seems to acquiesce in George Carey's opinion that people should not select for themselves what is right and wrong. Our society is founded upon people constantly making such decisions. The majority of crime is committed by people who know that what they are doing is wrong, but are driven to it by anger, need, or some other consideration that overrides a simple version of morality.
Ben Leslie,
London

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Hutus killed in wake of Burundi coup

Chris McGreal in Bujumbura

BURUNDI'S mainly Tutsi army took control of the violence-racked Central African country last week, deposed the civilian coalition government that included moderate Hutus, and defied the outside world to do its worst.

Gunfire echoed through the capital, Bujumbura, and armoured personnel carriers packed with troops rolled into the centre. The coup was apparently bloodless, however.

"Burundi is not going to be colonised again. This is an independent country and we are not going to be governed by foreigners," an army spokesman, Lieutenant Colonel Longin Minani, said as the United Nations and Organisation of African Unity (OAU) condemned the coup and threatened intervention.

After criticising deep divisions within the Hutu-Tutsi coalition, and its inability to tackle the civil war, the military suspended the parliament and political parties.

It also took control of state radio, banned demonstrations and strikes, imposed a 7pm curfew, temporarily cut telephone links, and closed the airport and land borders. A former military dictator, Pierre Buyoya, was declared president.

Maj Buyoya told the nation: "Our first goal is to stop immediately the massacres and all forms of criminality that have prevailed in Burundi for three years." The following day, however, he promised to intensify the bloody civil war against Hutu rebels while trying to convince the international community that he is a solid democrat committed to peace.

Belgian radio had earlier quoted him as saying Burundi probably needed outside help to solve its civil strife: "Even though I'm a soldier, I don't believe in a military solution."

The international community last week seemed no closer to deciding what to do about the coup. The OAU secretary-general, Salim Ahmed Salim, threatened to use force but did not say where the troops would come from. The United States said it still recognised the deposed Hutu president, Sylvestre Ntibantunganya, who sought shelter at the US ambassador's residence. But the US envoy met Mr Buyoya twice in the two days after he took office. He declined to discuss the nature of their talks.

A UN spokeswoman, Sylvana Foa, said the UN secretary-general, Boutros Boutros-Ghali, "supported calls for a regional summit to be convened urgently to discuss ways of calming the situation".

At the weekend, Tutsi soldiers massacred up to 150 unarmed villagers in Mont Gisagara, in Gitega province, a day after Maj Buyoya admitted "misconduct" by troops and promised to restore discipline, it was revealed on Monday.

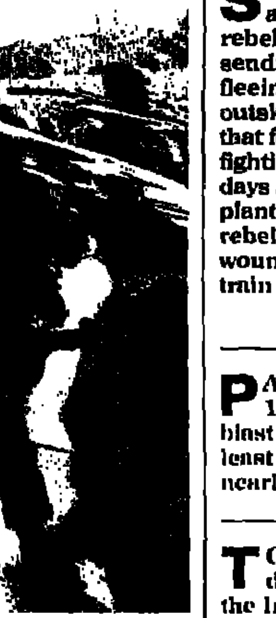
Three days earlier, the army watched as Tutsi students murdered at least 20 Hutu classmates at Gitega's agricultural college. Lt Col Minani confirmed that the army had killed several dozen people at the weekend, but said they were all Hutu rebels. Witnesses had a different story, underscoring the military's attempts to portray spiralling mass murder as a one-sided genocide of Tutsis by Hutu rebels.

The killing was set in motion when Hutu rebels attacked rice and coffee plantations near Mont Gisagara. The insurgents burnt offices and crops to hit Burundi's shaky economy. The army arrived the next day to burn miles of bush in an attempt to flush out the rebels. It then turned on the local population.

On Monday there were reports of more killings in the Mont Gisagara area by the army. But it was unclear whether the military was confronting Hutu insurgents — who have infiltrated large parts of the province — or was clearing the overwhelmingly Hutu population from villages to depopulate unstable areas.

● The US paid Burundi's military leader almost $150,000 over the past three years to promote democracy and peace, it was revealed last week. A significant proportion given to Maj Buyoya's Foundation for Unity, Peace and Democracy was to organise an international conference in Burundi, to include such notable peacemakers as Archbishop Desmond Tutu. The meeting was due to take place more than a year ago but has been repeatedly postponed.

Comment, page 10
Washington Post, page 14



Army recruits swarm through Bujumbura after last week's military coup PHOTOGRAPH: CORINNE DUFKA

Explosion blew off front of TWA jet, say investigators

Ian Katz in New York

THE TWA Boeing 747 that crashed into the Atlantic on July 17 probably continued to fly for up to 11 seconds after an explosion blew off the front of the jet.

The chilling picture of the last seconds of Flight 800 emerged at the weekend after crash investigators discovered the front of the passenger cabin more than a mile and a half from the rest of the wreckage.

The discovery has reportedly led investigators to conclude that the crash was caused by a missile or bomb exploding near the front of the aircraft, possibly in the front cargo area.

An investigation source said it seemed some First Class passengers were thrown out of the aircraft by the explosion that tore the jet in two approximately 11 minutes into its flight from New York to Paris.

At the weekend searchers said they had found a 50ft section of the fuselage, boosting hopes that they might soon recover most of the 77 victims still unaccounted for. Robert Francis, the vice-chairman of the National Transportation Safety Board, admitted that some of the bodies may never be recovered.

James Kallstrom, the FBI agent in charge of the anti-terrorist task force investigating the crash, said he thought enough evidence was being gathered from the wreckage to establish the cause this week.

As FBI agents hunted for the terrorist who detonated the Atlanta bomb, Mr Kallstrom said he did not believe that incident was linked to the TWA explosion.

Crash investigators hope "a fraction of a second" of unexplained sound found on the cockpit voice recorder from TWA Flight 800 will solve the mystery of why the aircraft exploded and plunged into the Atlantic, killing all 230 people on board.

The noise comes at the end of one of the tapes from the two so-called black box flight recorders found amid wreckage on the sea floor off eastern Long Island.

Officials said the conversation in the cockpit had been "routine" up to the point of the unexplained sound, heard just before the recording cut off. "We've got some stuff there and we'll do our best to analyse what we've got," said Robert Francis, the vice-chairman of the National Transportation Safety Board.

The breakthrough in the investigation came as President Clinton and his wife Hillary flew to New York to meet relatives of victims who have become increasingly angry about the slow pace of the recovery effort.

Iran raid strengthens grip on northern Iraq

David Hirst in Beirut

IRANIAN armed forces on Monday said they had concluded their military operations inside the Western-protected Kurdish enclave of northern Iraq. The raid represented an almost contemptuous display of Iran's steadily growing influence in the region.

According to reports from Kurdistan, up to 2,000 Revolutionary Guards entered Iraqi territory at the weekend at various points and converged on the town of Koisinjak, 50 miles from the frontier. Refugees were reportedly still fleeing their advance on Monday.

Their aim was to destroy an anti-Iranian Kurdish resistance camp. Exiled Iranian Kurdish leaders and their families were living there under the nominal protection of Iraqi Kurds.

Iran recently accused them of attacks inside Iranian territory. It claimed on Monday to have killed dozens of "counter-revolutionaries" in its offensive.

The raid shows that Iran is now the main player in the "liberated" Kurdish territory which the Western allies have been protecting from the air since the Gulf war.

"This is the idiotic result of US policies toward Saddam," said a pro-Western Iraqi politician. "Operation Provide Comfort has come to mean providing a platform for the mullahs to do as they please."

Among other things, the mullahs can give whatever support they choose to anti-Turkish Kurdistan Workers' Party guerrillas entrenched in the enclave. They are also well placed to deny the United States a part in managing President Saddam's overthrow and shaping the succession.

Ayatollah Bakr Hakim, the Iranian-backed Iraqi opposition leader, confirmed reports that President Saddam had recently foiled a US-Jordanian military *putsch* against him.

"The real meaning of his statement is the message it conveys to the US: if you have the right to try to overthrow Saddam, so does Iran — and better means, too," said the pro-Western Iraqi politician.

The fratricidal struggle between the two main Kurdish parties — Massoud Barzani's Kurdistan Democratic Party and Jalal Talabani's Patriotic Union of Kurdistan — gave Iran its great opportunity in northern Iraq.

The US failed to mediate an end to the parties' conflict and they turned to Iran instead. As a result, Iran now has tentacles, from humanitarian missions to intelligence bureaus, all over the north.

The Week

SRI LANKAN troops launched an offensive on the northern rebel-held town of Kilinochchi, sending hundreds of civilians fleeing. Soldiers thrust to the outskirts of the town, in a push that followed some of the worst fighting in the war. It began two days after bombs, said to be planted by the Tamil Tiger rebels, killed 78 people and wounded 450 on a commuter train in Colombo.

Washington Post, page 14

PAKISTANI police are holding 137 suspects after a bomb blast at Lahore airport killed at least four people and wounded nearly 70.

TOUGH measures to crack down on organised crime in the Irish republic, after a wave of drug-related and terrorist shootings, have been rushed through parliament in Dublin.

BRITISH soldiers in former Yugoslavia have been warned to take extra precautions against the threat of male rape after a series of reported incidents in the Croatian port of Split on the Adriatic coast.

WOMEN'S average pay levels are still well below men's, despite a 50-year-old worldwide agreement that the sexes must earn equal wages for equal work, the International Labour Organisation said.

IVAN MILAT, aged 51, an Australian roadworker, was found guilty of murdering seven backpackers in a remote forest southwest of Sydney. He received a life sentence.

HUNDREDS of leftwing delegates from around the world — including Danielle Mitterrand, the widow of France's former president — gathered in the southern Mexican state of Chiapas at the invitation of the Zapatista guerrilla leader Subcomandante Marcos.

NIGERIAN police are to charge senior opposition leaders with conspiracy in connection the murder of the wife of the detained opposition leader, Moshood Abiola.

SPANISH police arrested three members of the Basque separatist group ETA, who they say were planning to consolidate the group's summer bombing campaign.

ONE worker died and a small storage area was contaminated by radiation in two incidents at a Ukrainian nuclear power plant, the country's nuclear energy authority said.

THIEVES entered a railway yard in central Montreal and drove off a truck containing one and a half million Canadian $2 coins, weighing nearly 60 tons.

Struggle to save hunger strikers

John Hooper in Istanbul

TURKISH doctors were striving at the weekend to save the lives and health of 170 leftwing prisoners moved to hospital after their hunger strike ended at the weekend. A 12th inmate died after the protest was called off, and there were fears that others could die or be left with permanent mental or physical disabilities.

A 10-week fast — a partially successful attempt to block the dispersal of political prisoners — may also have inflicted lasting damage on the new Islamist-led coalition. The government was widely criticised in the Turkish media for its apparent intransigence as the death toll climbed into double figures.

But under heavy pressure from inside and outside the country, the authorities began negotiating through intermediaries and struck a deal which gave way on one of the protesters' key demands. Sevket Kazan, the justice minister, said he had agreed to move about 100 political prisoners to Istanbul and its environs from the Eskisehir prison, 200 miles away. The hunger strikers had wanted the jail, known as The Coffin, to be closed.

Human rights campaigners said the latest victim died on his way to hospital from prison in the western city of Bursa.

A spokesman for the Peoples' Law Bureau, which represents some of the inmates, reported that 10 were in coma. "It is much too late to save them," he said.



Police in Ankara beat a man during a rally that followed the death of Huseyin Demircioglu, one of the hunger strikers

At the weekend, about 2,000 political prisoners were reported to be refusing food, most of them members — or alleged members — of far left urban guerrilla groups. Kamber Oerkogak, a representative of Turkey's Human Rights Association, said all those who had died were awaiting trial.

The hunger strike began after the previous government — a coalition of secular rightwing parties — introduced a new policy for dealing with Turkey's 8,000 political prisoners. The measures involved dispersal to other jails.

The authorities have claimed existing arrangements keep prisoners subject to the authority of their organisations, and make it possible to carry out terrorist training.

The protesters argued that dispersal would make it impossible for remand prisoners to defend themselves properly. Isolated in cells, they would be unable to formulate political responses to what the prisoners regard as political charges. Dispatched to distant jails, they would find it more difficult to consult their lawyers.

Underlying these concerns were fears of brutality. According to Amnesty International, seven political prisoners have been beaten to death in Turkey's jails since last September. In 1989, two died of dehydration while being transferred from Eskisehir prison to Aydin, in the southwest, in almost completely unventilated metal vans.

The understanding was reached amid fears that the hunger strike was jeopardising Turkey's delicate relationship with the European Union.

Within Turkey, several commentators were appalled by the way in which the authorities — apparently fearing funeral demonstrations — denied permission for the victims to be buried in accordance with their own or their families' wishes.

N Korea's torrential rains threaten new famine

John Gittings

NORTH KOREA has been hit by torrential rains only a year after floods devastated crops and brought millions close to starvation.

Officials in the capital, Pyongyang, have called for efforts "to prevent damage from great flooding", saying that up to 20 inches of rain has fallen over two days in parts of the country near the 38th parallel.

"Unexpected floods caused heavy losses of human lives," the official news agency said, and "seriously damaged vast areas of the country." More than 60 people have already died across the border in South Korea.

The North's faltering economy was shaken by last year's floods, which led to an unprecedented appeal for foreign aid. The latest rains have hit some of the same areas as last year, including parts of the western rice belt in North and South Hwanghae provinces.

Recent visitors to the North say famine has so far been avoided thanks to rationing and strong social discipline. But calorie intakes are at a minimum and there is severe deprivation.

In Rome, the World Food Programme has announced that it is expanding its emergency food aid operation in North Korea to feed 1.5 million people. Distribution is being expanded to include more than 500,000 children under the age of five, who are most vulnerable to malnutrition brought on by cuts in food deliveries by the state. The WFP will also continue to supply 500,000 of last year's flood victims, and another 550,000 farmers and their families who are reclaiming damaged land.

In a bizarre episode on Monday at the border village of Panmunjom, a North Korean soldier who had been swept by the floods through the demilitarised zone and into the south was returned home shouting "Hooray for the Dear Leader Kim Jong-il". Released after questioning by South Korean investigators, he was carried out of sight on the shoulders of cheering North Korean troops.

In the same village locals later watched a ceremony to hand over a casket containing the remains of a United States pilot shot down in the Korean war and now returned by the North.

The remains were the first discovery by a 10-member US team operating in North Korea. The team's presence in the country is seen as a fresh sign of gradually improving relations between the US and North Korea, but its neighbours agree that an abrupt collapse of the Kim Jong-il regime could destabilise the East Asian region.

Two years after succeeding his father, Kim Il-sung, Kim Jong-il has still not assumed the full titles of party and state leader, and speculation continues about the strength of his political grip on the country.

Europe heads for trade war with US

John Palmer in Brussels and Mark Tran in New York

THE European Union and the United States edged closer to a trade war last week when President Clinton endorsed a bill empowering him to penalise companies investing in gas or oil projects in Iran and Libya.

The bill, introducing US sanctions against the two countries that Washington considers sponsors of terrorism, follows the threatened imposition of American penalties on non-US firms that trade with Cuba.

Iran condemned the US moves, saying they were certain to prove ineffective. "It's nothing new, just the continuation of measures taken by American rulers to pressure independent countries," the foreign ministry said in Tehran.

As the White House signalled President Clinton's approval for the bill, which has already been backed by both houses of Congress, the European Commission in Brussels was discussing counter-measures. It is close to finalising a directive prohibiting any EU company from co-operating with US courts in cases where US corporations take action against them under the Helms/Burton (anti-Cuban) legislation.

The directive would allow European companies hit by US sanctions to sue for compensation in European courts. The European courts would be authorised to seize any assets in Europe held by an American company that initiated legal action against European businesses.

"This is a proposal designed to respond to the threat of sanctions against our companies in the case of trade with Cuba. But it will be open to the Council of Ministers to extend it to cover other countries, such as Iran and Libya," a Commission spokesman said.

The European trade commissioner, Sir Leon Brittan, said: "The European Union shares American concern about international terrorism. Europeans have also been the victims of terrorism in Lockerbie and other incidents. But this is not the way to go about tackling the problem."

The British government has led the demand in the EU for effective European measures to counter US sanctions. The Foreign Office said: "We agree that there should be a common Western policy on Iran and Libya. But we cannot accept US pressure on its allies to impose sanctions under the threat of mandatory penalties on our companies carrying out trade with these countries in the oil and gas sectors."

The French government criticised the US measure. A foreign ministry spokesman said: "We do not accept the principle of extra-territorial application of national laws."

The French oil company Total, which has investments in two oilfields in Libya and signed a $600 million deal last year to develop an Iranian offshore oil and gas field, has said it will continue undeterred.

Battling terrorism, page 11

Israelis hunt drive-by killers

Derek Brown in Jerusalem

THE Israeli prime minister, Binyamin Netanyahu, has ordered troops to seek out and destroy a Palestinian militant cell after two Israelis were killed in a drive-by shooting.

The attack took place in Israel, but the government strongly hinted that troops would be allowed to pursue the gunmen into West Bank areas controlled by the Palestinian Authority.

Within hours of the shooting the Israeli army had sealed off borders with the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, and ordered tens of thousands of Palestinian workers in Israel to return home.

The government had only recently begun to relax a ban on Palestinian workers, imposed after a wave of suicide bombings in February and March that killed 63 people.

As a huge manhunt got under way, Mr Netanyahu insisted that the Palestinians in the autonomous areas must also do more to combat the militants. "We demand the Palestinian Authority act to quash the terror of the terrorist organisations, without distinction," he said.

The first Israeli civilians killed in the conflict since Mr Netanyahu took office on June 18 were in a car 10 miles within the so-called green line — which marks Israel's pre-1967 border with Jordan — when the vehicle was raked with gunfire from a passing car.

Uri Munk, aged 60, and his daughter-in-law, Rachel Munk, were killed instantly. His son, Ze'ev, was critically wounded, and his wife, Eliza, was treated for shock.

Mr Netanyahu also linked the latest killings with the deaths of an army doctor and medical orderly between Hebron and Bethlehem in the West Bank in January.

Israel Radio reported that the gunmen are most probably linked with the radical secular group, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine.

Meanwhile the Israeli foreign secretary, David Levy, has demanded that the Palestinian Authority closes three offices in Orient House in Arab east Jerusalem, Israel Radio said.

The report came as the US peace envoy, Dennis Ross, began a meeting with the Palestinian president, Yasser Arafat, in the Gaza Strip.

Mr Arafat denied knowledge of the shooting, but was quick to condemn the border closure. "This is another breach of what has been agreed upon," he said.

● According to authoritative reports in the Israeli press, Mr Netanyahu wants to step up Jewish colonisation of the West Bank. He wants to build settlements along the so-called bypass roads linking existing Jewish townships in the territory.

Ironically, the bypass roads were built by the previous Labour-led government to lessen friction between the 145,000 or so Jewish settlers and the 1 million Palestinians of the West Bank.

The reported expansion plans have outraged Palestinians, who have seen Israel expropriate more than half of the West Bank since 1967.

Japan battles with killer bacteria

Juliet Hindell in Tokyo

UNTIL a few weeks ago, few in the western city of Sakai had heard of the 0-157 strain of the Escherichia coli colon bacterium. Now they are all too aware that this ill-understood bug has caused a mass outbreak of food poisoning, producing 100 new cases a day. The toll so far: eight dead, including four schoolchildren, and 9,000 ill in 42 of Japan's 47 prefectures. In Sakai itself, all but 200 of the 6,487 people taken ill are children.

It's not just that the sushi shops are going out of business or that raw liver is off the menu for all but the most reckless gourmets. Japan fears it is losing a battle with a deadly enemy which threatens the competence of the State itself.

The public is angry, frustrated and frightened — angry over what is believed to have been an inadequate official response, frustrated by a lack of information, and frightened by the bug's elusive and deadly nature. It is suspected that the bacteria contaminated primary school lunches, yet extensive tests on 1,500 portions distributed to 90 schools, including eel sushi and cold noodles, have been negative.

Parents have been enraged to learn that key samples were thrown away untested by health officials. They also want to know why food was delivered in unrefrigerated trucks and left unchilled in school kitchens until catering staff arrived each morning. Many feel the negative test results reek of a cover-up.

In only one case has the cause been pinpointed. A boy in the Kanagawa prefecture west of Tokyo became ill after eating raw liver at a restaurant. Samples from the consignment contained the bacilli. Since then, sales of raw liver — usually a summer treat — and raw fish have fallen by about 10 per cent.

The health ministry, already under attack because of the infection of haemophiliacs with Aids, has been accused of complacency.

A special Cabinet panel has been set up. Public television cancelled a an Olympic broadcast and showed instead a programme on prevention. The authorities have closed school swimming pools and are urging people to cook meat thoroughly.

A banner flown from a small plane exhorts cleanliness — an otiose commandment in a country obsessive about hygiene. The health ministry has ordered a nationwide inspection of slaughterhouses, and officials in western Japan decided on Monday to distribute antibiotics.

The authorities have turned to the United States and Europe for help, and experts from the National Institute of Health in Washington will arrive in Tokyo this week.

Much is already known about the bug: what is exceptional about Japan's experience is its virulence. The strain was first recognised as a problem in 1982, but did not bare its teeth until 1993, when four people died in the US after eating undercooked hamburgers. There are about 80 outbreaks in North America every year, and they also occur in Australia, Africa and Europe. The bug's deadliness derives from its duplicity: it has borrowed a new gene to make shiga toxin, which causes shigella dysentery when carried by a different bacterium.

This toxin, when combined with *E. coli*'s ability to proliferate in the intestine, can trigger the signature symptoms — watery followed by bloody diarrhoea, which can lead to haemorrhaging, kidney damage and death. — *The Observer*

Sudan's youth face harsh lessons of war

FOR 13 years Sudan's south has been the scene of war between the government army of the mainly Arab north and the black African tribes of the oil-rich southern provinces, *writes a correspondent in Yambio.*

In recent years fighters of the Sudanese People's Liberation Army have split into factions and turned against each other.

A week of forcible conscription of young men by SPLA leaders began with a midnight round-up that continued until dawn. Schoolchildren were targeted. In all some 2,000 males, aged between 14 and 40, were herded to the local prison for "screening". Those too old or sick were released; the others began their new lives with shaven heads, the stamp of a new recruit. Those who resisted were beaten. Wives or mothers bore the punishment for those who managed to escape.

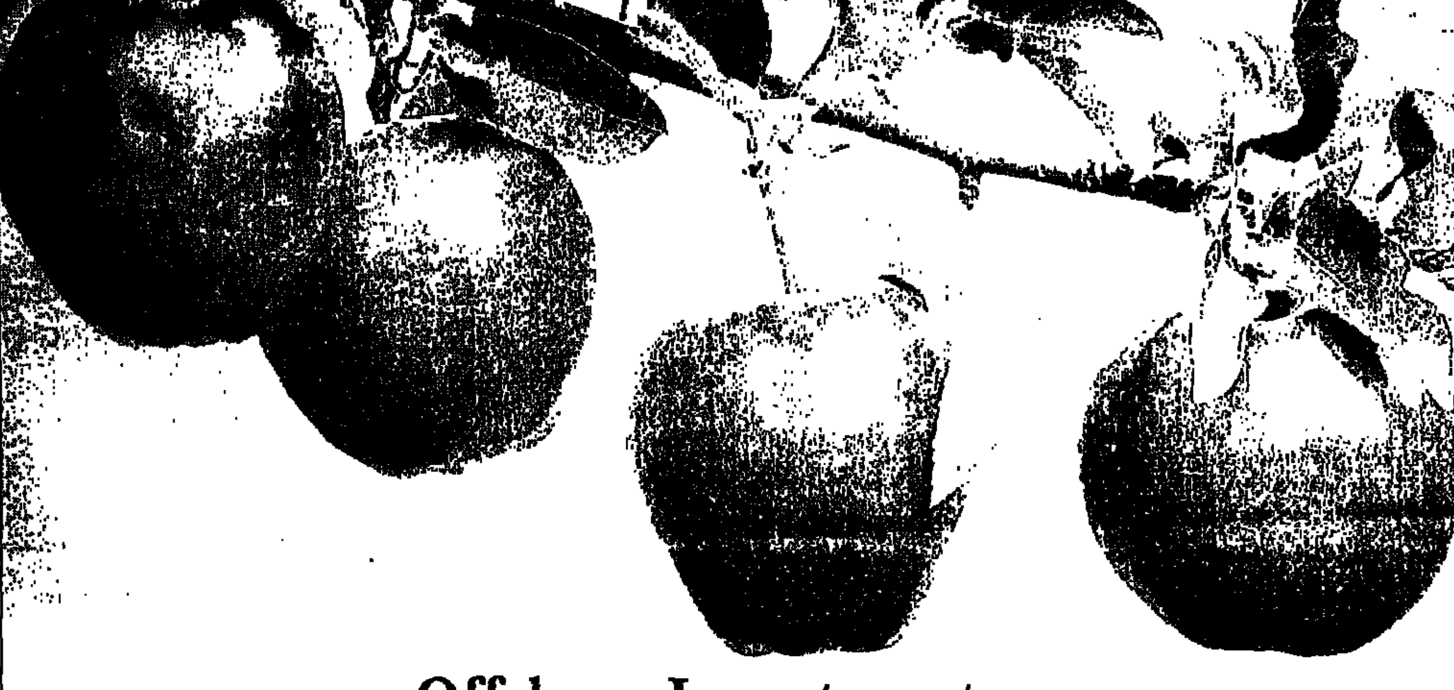
Yambio, capital of Western Equatoria province, was called the Garden of Eden of southern Sudan. There used to be 60,000 cotton producers. Even today, it is a food surplus area.

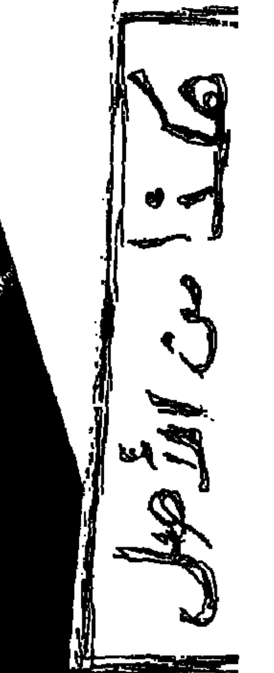
More than half the population of southern Sudan lives in exile. Those who fled to Zaire and the Central African Republic have faced insecurity, and assistance from the UN High Commissioner for Refugees has been reduced.

A woman who had been in exile for four years and who lost her menfolk to the conscription in June asked: "Why did I return? Our Sudan is hopeless." She is left with only her daughters; her brothers, aged 19, 17 and 14, had been taken. An old man, too frail to fight, was left with 24 children — nine of his sons and grandsons have been rounded up. Most homesteads are depleted of men, leaving women and children unprotected.

The new recruits, gathered into units of 50 in "Freedom Square", were addressed by one of the commanders. He told them his education had been interrupted to fight for liberation and that now it was their turn.

As the men set off into the bush they marched to battle songs, but the women sang funeral laments — no one returned from the previous conscription.





Cruel bill makes poverty a crime



The US this week

Martin Walker

FOR MOST of the last year, we have heard of the splits in the Republican ranks, usually over abortion. And one of the most striking features of the political scene has been the rare unity of the Democrats in Congress. Under the leadership of Tom Daschle in the Senate, who was by no means a popular or enthusiastic choice, the Democrats have learned to block, delay and toss procedural spanners in the works as if they were graduates of the Bob Dole school of opposition tactics. And in a sense, they were. Having gnashed their teeth for years at Dole's ability to tie the Democratic majorities in knots, the Democrats are having fun as they learn that the art of defensive play is to work as team.

Last week, however, the teamwork stopped. The Democrats in the Senate split down the middle. The welfare reform bill was passed by a margin of 74-24, with 23 Democrats voting against and 23 voting for the bill. President Clinton is all in a dither, trying to work out whether he dare veto this cruel and callous Republican bill.

Clinton's problem is that he promised on the campaign trial four years ago to "end welfare as we know it". He had lots of other snappy slogans about welfare. "A hand up, not a hand-out" was another, and there was one about "A breathing space, not a way of life". Too many slogans; not enough legislative ideas. Not having been able to craft an acceptable bill, he is stuck with the versions being churned out by the Republican majority.

The Republican bill that was devised in the House was described last week in a New York Times editorial as "odious". It would end the 60-year tradition, going back to the Great Depression, that in the last resort the federal government will intervene to feed children and their mothers if they face starvation. President Clinton has already agreed this in principle. He has also agreed the second principle, to impose a limit on the amount of time anyone may receive welfare. "Two years and then either find a job, or take the job we will find for you," is what he used to say on the campaign trail.

In Republican hands, that becomes simply the blunt weapon of two years and then welfare just stops. The Republican bills provide little of the funds or structure required to give people the remedial education and training they need, while on welfare, to get and hold down a job. Far less do the Republicans envisage the kind of public works and public employment schemes that would be needed to give substance to Clinton's airy promises.

Perhaps some of the welfare folk will respond to this bracing regime, buckle down to work and school, and become poor but respectable citizens trying to make a life on the minimum wage. But many of the lumpen poor may make do as they always have, by begging, by prostitution and by petty crime. This richest of countries already has a programme for that: Clinton's extra 100,000 police on the streets, along with the world's biggest prison-building programme since Stalin filled his Gulag.

Responsibility for the poor, under the Republican bill, reverts to the states, and the tax-hating states of the South and West are not known for their generosity — least of all to ethnic minorities. They may slash their welfare payments and impose new rules to disqualify most welfare applicants — and the federal government will be unable to stop them.

"We shall have children sleeping on grates," says an angry letter from a group of six Democratic Senators. (While admiring their outrage, it should be said that one finds men and women sleeping on grates any night of the year in Washington.)

The bill would also strip Medicaid, the subsidised medical service for the poor, from not just illegal but also from legal immigrants, until they become fully fledged citizens. The House bill would destroy the food stamp programme, which was crafted in its current form by the then Senator Dole of Kansas, and his close friend, the liberal Democrat George McGovern. There was bi-partisanship in those days, particularly when it served the interests of Dole's Kansas farmers.

The House bill imposes a 90-day maximum period for which workers below the age of 50 may receive food stamps. As Congressman Ed Markey noted acidly, that would mean that an apprentice who is laid off for three months at the age of 21, collects food stamps and then works steadily for the next 28 years paying his taxes until he is made redundant, would no longer qualify for food stamps.

The Senate version of the bill softens the harshest aspects of the House plan. It drops the Medicaid ban for legal immigrants, but curtails the services they may receive. It makes no allowance for the provision of anything but food for children of parents whose welfare has run out. No clothes. No shoes. No medicine. The Senate bill also caps the total amount that the federal government will pay to the states each year to fulfil what may mockingly be called their obligations. So when the welfare rolls lengthen, as they doubtless will in the next recession, there will be no more money.

The Senate bill, which Clinton may feel constrained to sign under the pressure of imminent re-election, would affect 13 million Americans, of whom 9 million are children. At least 1 million children would be thrown, at once, into serious poverty. Honest workers who are sacked in this downsizing economy will find, for the first time in their lives, that they are not entitled to food stamps to help feed their children. Elderly parents from India or Mexico or Poland who have come, legally, to join their legal immigrant children working in the US will be evicted from nursing homes, and turned away from hospitals. And the really poor, those getting $6,300 or less a year, get a 10 per cent cut in their real incomes thanks to a $600 reduction in their food stamps.

The Republicans have an excuse. They take pride in being the hard-nosed and hard-hearted party, and they need to save this money in order to continue giving tax cuts to the better off, or to cut capital gains taxes for those wealthy investors on whose sturdy shoulders US prosperity depends.

President Clinton has no excuse to sign this cruel and savage measure. He is far ahead in the polls, and he is one of the world's most persuasive politicians. From the speeches he made in the 1980s, when he helped craft a far better welfare reform plan in hearings before Congress in the Reagan years, Clinton understands the welfare issue better than almost any other politician in the country.

And to be frank, it is not very difficult. There will always be poor people. Some will never have the skills or the will to respond to education and training and join the ranks of the employed. For these people, the alternatives are: lock them up, find them make-work jobs, feed them and try to forget them (the current system), or watch them starve, as a useful example and deterrent to others.

THE Republicans are well down the road to that last option. The first two options are expensive, the first probably more costly in the long run. A president with Clinton's skills could carefully explain why the second option is self-evidently the right thing to do in a society that honours work and self-reliance.

Rather than seize such a nettle, 100 days before the November election, Clinton will do what he always does; he will seek a deal. He will wait until the House and Senate agree on a compromise version of their two bills, and bargain for more funds for children and for legal immigrants, and maybe for a four-year review process to ensure that the states are not being too wildly divergent in their welfare allocations.

He will get one, perhaps two, of these demands. He will probably settle for something that he can say helps children, and rely for the rest on his growing hopes that he will beat Dole by such a wide margin that the Democrats will regain majorities in both House and Senate in November. Clinton will probably wring just enough of a compromise to reduce liberal outrage to tolerable levels, while avoiding Republican sneers that he failed to live up to yet another promise to reform welfare. Clinton is good at this fancy footwork, which helps him get re-elected but leaves his fellow Democrats wondering what on earth their party stands for these days.

The two Senators from Massachusetts, both Democrats, illustrate something deeper about the party's dilemma. One of them is Senator Edward Kennedy, who is gaining awesome stature as the last liberal, the leader of what was once the predominant tendency in US politics. Kennedy, who is not running for re-election this year, is firmly against the welfare bill. Senator John Kerrey, who does face re-election in November, voted for the bill.

Senator Kerrey, a Vietnam war veteran, has been a centrist Democrat. He supports cutting capital gains tax, is openly sceptical about affirmative action to help minorities, and has been sympathetic to whites who profess themselves victims of job preferment for blacks. Unlike Kennedy, Kerrey is a Clintonian sort of Democrat.

But then his opponent in the Senate race, Governor William Weld, is a Clintonian sort of Republican. Weld is fiscally conservative, and a great believer in tax cuts and balanced budgets. He is also socially liberal, supporting abortion rights for women, equal rights for gays and affirmative action for blacks. For the moment, Weld has the fatter campaign war chest. But Kerrey married Teresa Heinz, widow of his Senate colleague John Heinz, who was a multi-multi-millionaire from baked beans. It will take deep pockets to outspend the Kerrey campaign.

The Massachusetts Senate race is important, not just because a Weld victory might help the Republicans to keep a majority that they fear losing elsewhere, but because it speaks volumes for the way American politics is heading. Kerrey versus Weld pits two centrist Clintonians against each other, with only nominal party tags to differentiate them. Indeed, Governor Weld has proposed in his state just the sort of welfare reform that Clinton could swallow: 60 days on welfare for healthy mothers with older children to find a job. On the basis of his vote for the Republican bill to reform welfare, Senator Kerrey should have few problems with that.

So the 23 Senate Democrats who voted with Kennedy against this appalling welfare bill are the liberal rump. The 30-odd Republican Senators who can be counted on to vote for the most absurd measures to prevent abortions are the rightists. And the real power is wielded in the middle by the Clintons and the Kerreys and the Welds, who don't believe in anything too strongly, except the need to keep the old ship of state bobbing along, under the reliable directions of helmsmen like themselves.

And if those unruly people travelling steerage start complaining, they can always put them in chains. They are a tough bunch on law and order, these centrists. Look at the way Weld rose in the polls after his proposal to stop parole for convicted criminals. It can't be long before Clinton takes up that vote-catching wheeze.

Washington to raise rights at trade summit

Nick Cumming-Bruce in Jakarta

THE American secretary of state, Warren Christopher, indicated last week that the battle over human rights between West and East — which dogged discussions about Burma at the conference of Asian and Pacific foreign ministers — may also cloud December's Singapore summit of the World Trade Organisation.

Mr Christopher told the conference of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) and its "dialogue partners" that the United States will raise human rights, and that the summit should look at "the relationship between trade and core labour standards".

He told US businessmen in Jakarta that Washington will also pursue the issue of bribery, which he said costs American companies tens of billions of dollars each year in lost business.

Mr Christopher said the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development is already trying to curb bribes and tax deductions for illicit payments. The US would press its main trading partners to make good on these commitments.

Washington's stance is opposed to that of Singapore and its Asean partners, which want to keep non-trade issues off the WTO summit agenda.

Asean was supported at the conference by Australia's foreign minister, Alexander Downer, who said the summit should stick to trade liberalisation.

The labour issue — covering minimum wage levels as well as child labour — is sensitive among Asean members, whose tiger economies have mostly thrived from competitive exports produced by cheap workers.

A report in June by the International Labour Organisation estimated that nearly one in 10 Indonesian children aged between 10 and 14 works.

The Week in Britain James Lewis

Portillo outguns Chancellor to secure £3.5bn defence deal

THE BRITISH defence industry was given a pre-election boost by the Government when it was awarded a package of contracts worth £3.5 billion, which will create or sustain a minimum of 5,000 — and possibly as many as 10,000 — skilled jobs.

The decision to spend the money was a victory for the Defence Secretary, Michael Portillo, over the Chancellor, Kenneth Clarke. Both men would be contenders for the Conservative party leadership if John Major were to fall by the wayside. The Chancellor had fought strenuously to defer the announcement, hoping that some of the contracts could be pruned or put on indefinite hold.

When the Cabinet postponed approval of the contracts earlier last month, the Treasury seemed to have won. But the Prime Minister, pressed by a number of Tory MPs whose constituencies are dependant on defence contracts, sent in his deputy, Michael Heseltine, to resolve the dispute. Applying the political arithmetic of jobs and votes, he came down on the side of Mr Portillo.

The main beneficiary will be British Aerospace (BAe), which gets the £2 billion contract to rebuild and modernise 20 Nimrod maritime patrol aircraft. In partnership with the French firm, Matra, BAe Dynamics also gets an £800 million order for air-launched Storm Shadow cruise missiles, similar to the US Tomahawk. And GEC-Marconi Dynamics gets a £700 million contract for Brimstone anti-tank missiles.

PAEDOPHILES who abuse children while abroad will face prosecution in Britain under proposed legislation announced by the Home Secretary, Michael Howard. The move comes amid concern over paedophiles who travel to countries such as Thailand and the Philippines for sex with child prostitutes.

The number of prosecutions, however, is expected to be few, since the rules of evidence require witnesses to appear in person to allow cross-examination. Home Office officials said it might be necessary to allow witnesses to give evidence by satellite link if they could not travel to Britain.

British courts are also to be given new powers to prosecute "foreign extremists" for conspiring or inciting terrorist or criminal acts abroad while they are in the UK. This could cover the activities of those such as the Saudi dissident, Mohammed al-Mas'ari, against whom charges of inciting racial hatred were recently dropped.

AN OUTSPOKEN attack on the Queen was made by William Oddie, a former Anglican priest and Catholic convert, who accused the monarch of "petty Catholic spite" and of sacrificing Christian principles for a "damage limitation exercise" in urging the Prince and Princess of Wales to divorce.

Writing in the Catholic Herald, Dr Oddie said that, as Supreme Governor of the Church of England, the Queen was bound to hold, and not undermine, the teachings of the Church, and that included the indissolubility of marriage. "All Christians now have to ask how much longer she has the right to our loyalty," he said.

The marriage breakdown of three of the Queen's children and the "cohabitation" of the fourth had transformed the Royal Family's symbolic support of the family, based on marriage "into an even more powerful blow against it".

Middle-of-the-road Catholics were quick to distance themselves from Dr Oddie's remarks, pointing to the "warm relationship" in recent years between the Queen and the leader of British Catholics, Cardinal Basil Hume. Others thought the Catholic Herald was only bringing into the open what Catholics were thinking in private.

Harry Coen, the acting editor, defended the article and called for the disestablishment of the Church of England.

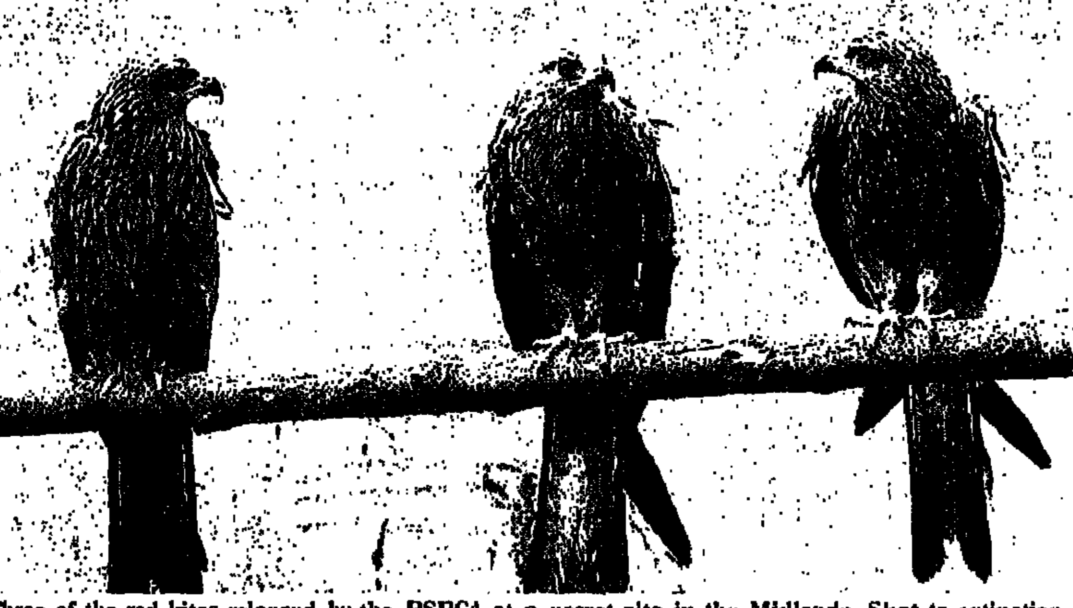
UP TO 4,000 frozen embryos, from about 900 couples, were due to be destroyed this week because the parents cannot be contacted, have shown no interest in the fate of their potential children, or do not want them any more.

The destruction has to take place on July 31 because Parliament ruled that from August 1991, embryos could be frozen for only five years. The regulations have since been relaxed so that embryos can be stored for 10 years — and, in exceptional circumstance, even longer — but only if the parents wish it.

Ruth Deech, chairwoman of the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority, which regulates clinics holding the embryos, said failure to obtain consent "means, sadly, allowing a number of embryos to perish". Demands by prolife groups that the embryos should be given to childless couples, rather than destroyed, were dismissed by Mrs Deech as legally and ethically wrong.

She also announced that the authority is to end payments to egg and sperm donors after controversy over high sums offered to some women. It emerged last year that women were paid up to £1,000 to act as "human hens" by donating eggs to childless couples. The payments were made via an agency that exploited a loophole in the law intended to prevent commercial trade.





Three of the red kites released by the RSPCA at a secret site in the Midlands. Shot to extinction in England by Victorian landowners, the species is being reintroduced from Spain PHOTOGRAPH: PAUL ROGERS

Bridgewater appeal granted

John Mullin

MICHAEL HOWARD, the Home Secretary, signalled a surprise change of heart last week when he announced he was referring to the Court of Appeal the convictions of four men jailed for the killing of newsboy Carl Bridgewater in 1978.

Staffordshire police, which led the investigation, and the Director of Public Prosecutions office are braced for an uncomfortable hearing. Lawyers representing the men are certain to allege misconduct.

They will also point out that the Home Secretary's decision came just before a legal challenge to his refusal to do so began in the High Court. Mr Howard said in a provisional ruling in December that he was "not minded" to refer the case. Last week, he said it was going back "on a fine balance of the arguments".

It was the first time a Home Secretary has offered such an opinion on a referral. The hearing may not take place until next year.

One of the convicted men, Jim Robinson, said from prison that after so much waiting all he could do was take it as just another day. The experience had been "a terrible thing, not just for us but for our families . . . it smashes you up over the years".

Ann Whelan, aged 53, mother of Michael Hickey, another of the jailed men, said: "I had come to believe that the Home Office was not interested in right and wrong. This day is a victory and a triumph for justice. Everyone will see these men exonerated after 18 years."

The men's previous appeal lasted 41 days before it was rejected in March 1989. A welter of fresh evidence has since been gathered, although Kenneth Clarke, Mr Howard's predecessor, proclaimed the convictions safe and satisfactory in February 1993.

Carl Bridgewater, aged 13, a newspaper delivery boy, was shot when he interrupted a burglary at Yew Tree Farm, Wordsley, Staffordshire, in September 1978. Had he lived, he would have been 31. Brian Bridgewater, his father, said recently: "Just occasionally, I think, 'I wonder what the boy would be doing now?'"

Mr Robinson, now 62, and Vincent Hickey, 42, were jailed for life for murder at Stafford crown court in November 1979, with a recommendation they serve a minimum 25 years. Michael Hickey, 34, Vincent's cousin, was 16 at the time of the killing and was detained at Her Majesty's Pleasure.

Pat Molloy, a father of five, was given a 12-year sentence for manslaughter. He died in prison in June 1981, aged 53. His appeal will be addressed with the others.

Molloy received a lesser sentence after making a statement admitting he was at the farm when Carl Bridgewater was shot, but claiming he was upstairs.

The Molloy confession is at the centre of the referral. Four language experts back Molloy's claims that it was a police fabrication. A forensic psychiatrist called in on the Home Secretary's behalf agrees.

An internal Home Office document shows officials knew he had been held unlawfully for 56 hours without access to a solicitor. He said he was assaulted.

What appears to have swung the balance is the persistence of Michael Chance, lawyer in charge of the prosecution. He has written several times to Mr Howard, admitting the decision not to disclose fingerprint evidence was prejudicial to the defence.

That evidence was released only in 1994 when Mr Nichol secured it through a High Court ruling. It shows police found two unidentified fingerprints on Carl's bike, which had been tossed into a pig sty.

Mr Nichol's trump card, though, will be the appearance of jury members. The appeal court's test is whether new evidence might have swayed the trial jury. Tim O'Malley, now 48, the foreman, and Lucinda Graham, 36, are both now convinced of the men's innocence.

● A £200 million emergency prison building programme was announced last week to improve security and to cope with a rapid rise in the jail population triggered by Mr Howard's "prison works" policy. It will be partly funded by cuts in compensation payments to victims of violent crime.

The prison population has risen by more than 1,000 in the past four weeks alone to hit a record 55,851 five years earlier than was officially forecast.

Ulster talks left in the air on way to proceed

Peter Hetherington

MULTI-PARTY talks on the future of Northern Ireland broke up on Monday without any agreement on how to proceed in September after a six-week summer recess.

Amid bitter disagreement and recriminations between Unionists and nationalists over decommissioning terrorist weapons, the Northern Ireland Secretary, Sir Patrick Mayhew, and Ireland's deputy prime minister, Dick Spring, admitted that progress had been much slower than expected.

Dublin and London will be bitterly disappointed that after seven weeks of largely informal discussions, lasting more than 40 hours, the nine parties in the peace process have only reached agreement on rules and procedures which will allow them to talk.

But they cannot bring themselves to approve an agenda that will determine what they talk about when discussions resume on September 9.

Sir Patrick denied that the talks had been in peril. While he would have liked more progress, critics had to remember that this was a process that had to overcome divisions going back centuries. "Therefore it is not surprising that progress is slow. What is encouraging is that progress has been made."

Mr Spring denied that his government was fudging over the hand-over of weapons. "We want to tackle the issue in a practical and pragmatic way," he said.

But the route is proving elusive. The Ulster Unionists and the Democratic Unionists want decommissioning at the top of the agenda, while the nationalist SDLP, the centrist Alliance Party and the small loyalist parties linked to paramilitaries believe this is a tactical ploy to rule out Sinn Fein.

Unionists argue they have been let down because, they claim, the British and Irish governments promised early discussions on the hand-over of terrorist weapons.

Blair puts squeeze on Labour rebels

Michael White

THE Labour leadership last week survived the latest test of Tony Blair's authority when Labour MPs buckled under and voted to keep Harriet Harman in the shadow cabinet team that he wants to fight the coming election.

Not only did the embattled shadow health secretary survive the private fury of many backbenchers over her decision to send her younger son to a selective grammar school, but Jack Cunningham, who lost his place last year, bounced back to take the vacancy left by Joan Lestor's decision to stand down.

Though Ms Harman was well down the field with 149 votes, she was 55 votes clear of Ann Clwyd, another ex-shadow cabinet member who had been backed by some MPs to oust Ms Harman.

In the snap election, called early to prevent a divisive autumn campaign, there was scant consolation for six other backbenchers who defied the leadership's no contest plea so close to the real battle with John Major.

With fewer candidates, all the winners got more votes than usual and women took top places. Margaret Beckett was again first with 251, closely followed by Ann Taylor (250) and Clare Short (218).

But Ms Short launched into an apparent attack on the Labour leadership after Mr Blair rewarded her with demotion. After her best ever showing in the annual poll, the left-winger was moved from the high-profile transport portfolio to overseas development.

The move was part of Mr Blair's effort to tighten his white-knuckled grip on the shadow cabinet.

Ms Short, writing in the Daily Express, said she had always believed in public service, and had not until recently faced up to the "full nastiness" in politics. She criticised its "vanity and ego, manoeuvres and dishonesty".

Many MPs may judge the move prudent after Ms Short's remarks on tax, the need for a debate on legalising cannabis and other issues, more alarming to spin doctors than to voters.

Two key Blairites were also shifted. Ms Harman and Chris Smith swapped jobs, Ms Harman taking on social security and Mr Smith health. It prompted some MPs to claim that Mr Smith had paid the price of his defence of child benefit and other aspects of social security entitlements from Gordon Brown's desire to target some payments in favour of the poorest.

Some backbench eyebrows were raised at Mr Blair's appointment of Alistair Darling, one of the shadow cabinet runners-up who did not stand last week — at the leadership's behest — to be shadow chief secretary in Mr Brown's team.

Mr Blair is planning to promote three high-profile women MPs despite the furore over Ms Short's "nasty and hurtful" demotion.

The Labour leader is set to make Tessa Jowell, MP for Dulwich since 1992, Mr Smith's new deputy at health. Janet Anderson, the MP for Rossendale and Darwen, will step into Ms Jowell's shoes as spokesperson on women's issues. Both are loyal modernisers.

In a further shake-up, the MP for Hampstead, Glenda Jackson, a Prescott campaigner in the leadership contest, is set for promotion to a campaigning role. So is Neath's Peter Hain, and Kevin Hughes, MP for Doncaster North.

The Labour leadership is planning to isolate persistent troublemakers within the party's ranks at Westminster — by accusing them of being in "unholy alliance" with the Conservatives to attack Mr Blair, and by stressing its commitment to much wider two-way consultation with backbenchers if Labour wins power.

The usually emollient chief whip, Donald Dewar, is writing to some MPs assuring them that the leadership does not want to stifle genuine debate, but does want such debate to be "constructive" and free from personal attacks.

Thus, an attack last week on the proposed EU single currency by Labour Eurosceptics is regarded as acceptable, but not if it is presented as 50 MPs attacking the leadership. Nor is the spectacle of leftwing MPs such as Alan Simpson and Ken Livingstone using Tory tabloids to promulgate anti-leadership views.

In the Mail on Sunday, Mr Livingstone likened the voting to "the old Soviet Union where everyone got re-elected by near-unanimous votes".

Mr Dewar is writing to a number of MPs who "overstepped the mark", accusing the leadership of "strong arm tactics" and "rigging" the poll for the shadow cabinet.

● In his last pre-election reshuffle, Mr Major rewarded loyalty and punished the Tory Eurosceptics promoting a clutch of party whips.

He replaced Tim Eggar, the flamboyant Steve Norris and David Heathcoat-Amory, the unexpected joker in the reshuffle pack, with three loyal ministerial upgrades and promoted a clutch of ex-whips in a 14-strong mini-reshuffle confined to the lower slopes of office.

To mitigate a dull package, Mr Major bid for tabloid headlines by making Jacqui Lait, 47-year-old MP for Hastings, an assistant whip.

As the first of her sex to penetrate the boys' locker room of the Tory whips' office she is assured a place in history.

BBC governors reaffirm Birt's restructure of World Service

Martin Linton

THE governors of the BBC decided last week to push ahead with their restructuring plans for the World Service after Malcolm Rifkind, the Foreign Secretary, ordered that a working group be set up to assess the impact on the quality of the service.

In a terse statement at the end of an exceptionally long meeting the governors defiantly "reiterated their belief that the World Service plans would yield significant benefits, enhancing the quality of services and reducing costs".

According to the BBC, the governors instructed the board of management, represented by deputy director general Bob Phillis, to continue work on detailed organisational planning. The chairman, Sir Christopher Bland, has already agreed not to take any irreversible steps before the BBC-Foreign Office working party has reported on the plans in October. But according to John Tusa, a former World Service managing director, the statement cast doubt on the pledge.

He said it showed the plans were a *fait accompli*, and "casts doubt on the genuineness of the whole working party with the Foreign Office".

After the meeting, even governors known to doubt the wisdom of director general John Birt's plans were keeping their heads down.

"It's just a change to the management structure really, which is not going to affect people on the ground very much," were the soothing words from a BBC spokesperson.

But there was no attempt to deny that the governors had been taken aback by the strength of feelings against the restructuring plans, including the 240 MPs who have opposed the plan.



Inquiry into Nazi gold deal

THE Foreign Secretary, Malcolm Rifkind, has agreed to launch an inquiry into what happened to Nazi gold left in Swiss bank vaults after the war, and worth more than £1 billion at today's prices, *writes Martin Linton.*

Documents declassified by the United States national archives in May show that after the capitulation the Swiss were left holding German gold estimated to be worth £1.7 billion at today's prices. The US, Britain and France believed that of this, at least £800 million, probably £1.2 billion, and possibly all of it, was looted.

But a letter from the Swiss legation in Washington in 1946, suggests that the three Allies agreed to a deal under which the Swiss paid them a total of £250 million at today's prices — well below the minimum estimate of looted gold — and kept a similar sum.

Labour MP Greville Janner wrote in June to Mr Rifkind and the Defence Secretary, Michael Portillo, asking whether British Intelligence had any documents about this secret deal. Mr Rifkind replied on his and Mr Portillo's behalf that "none of the intelligence services is aware of having such information".

But documents released by Mr Janner show that the British embassy in Washington was closely involved in the negotiations. A letter from the embassy to the US treasury, market "strictly confidential" and dated January 1942, revealed that Reichsbank officials had delivered 21 tons of gold to the Swiss city of Basle.

The Foreign Office reacted by saying that Mr Rifkind had agreed to make further inquiries.

The issue is being pursued by the Holocaust Educational Trust, of which Mr Janner is chairman.

Major's tycoons covet welfare offices

David Hencke

TWO of Britain's wealthiest property developers — both members of Tory fund-raising clubs with direct access to ministers — are fighting each other to buy up Britain's social security offices before John Major calls a general election.

Millionaire developer John Ritblat, a member of the Tory fund-raising group, the Millennium Club, has entered the battle and expects to be on the shortlist, to be announced on Friday by Peter Lilley, the Social Security Secretary. His company, British Land, valued at more than £1.5 billion, is the third largest property conglomerate in the country.

Mr Ritblat is a member by invitation of the 60-strong Millennium Club, whose members pay £2,500 a year for access to ministers.

He is challenging Tory property tycoon, John Beckwith, who chairs the Premier Club, where wealthy business people pay up to £100,000 to dine with Mr Major. Mr Beckwith has secured backing worth $1 billion from a United States insurance company to buy up the offices.

Both groups are already short-listed to buy 58,000 Ministry of Defence homes, due to be sold later this year for more than £1.6 billion.

Confidential minutes of a meeting held with management advisers to Mr Lilley reveal that Mr Beckwith wants to buy all the social security property in England and Wales.

According to the minutes, Mr Beckwith says that it is a "good time to be planning a transaction of this nature and size, because of the large amount of capital available globally for major deals".

The sale of the social security offices, including the headquarters at Quarry House, Leeds, and management centres in Newcastle upon Tyne, will offer huge opportunities for property developers.

Some of the more lucrative high street locations could be resold and converted into upmarket shops on condition the developer provides alternative accommodation on council estates, where more people are on benefit.

Ministers have defended the short-listing of a consortium headed by Beckwith Capital Partners for the MoD estate in May.

Last week after being challenged in the House of Commons by the Labour MP Peter Hain, Mr Major said: "No one can buy access to ministers, no one is promised favours."

The planned bid for the social security offices, which will be put up for sale next year to raise at least £750 million for the Government, is under Beckwith Property Fund Management with chartered surveyors Richard Ellis and the United States insurance company AIG.

The minutes also disclose that Mr Beckwith was highly critical of Defence Secretary Michael Portillo's handling of its approach to buy the MoD estate with another consortium involving Hodge plc and Lehman Brothers (BHL), an American investment bank.

The MoD was said to be running the sale badly, with several bidding consortiums breaking apart and a poorly thought out shortlisting process.

'Revolutionary' shake-up of civil justice tackles costs

Clare Dyer

A BLUEPRINT for a revolution in the English civil justice system to curb delays, cut costs and make it easier for individuals to enforce their rights was unveiled last week by Lord Woolf, Master of the Rolls.

The far-reaching package of reforms, which follows a two-year investigation by the former law lord, is the most radical shake-up ever of civil justice in England and Wales and will require a dramatic change in the culture of litigation — taking control of the system away from lawyers and giving it to judges.

The proposals are geared to tackling costs, which Lord Woolf called "the most serious problem besetting our litigation system". Fear of costs deterred people from litigating, compelled others to settle against their wishes, enabled the powerful to take advantage of the weaker and had an adverse effect on the scope of legal aid.

Key elements of Lord Woolf's "new landscape for civil justice" include hands-on case management by judges, incentives to settle cases early, penalties for dragging them out, and a "fast track" simplified procedure with caps on lawyers' costs for claims under £10,000. For claims over £10,000, and complex cases under that amount, judges will manage cases closely and costs will be monitored by the court.

Lord Mackay, the Lord Chancellor, gave an enthusiastic welcome to the proposals, signalling the Government's intention to implement them speedily. A bill giving power to make new simplified "plain English" court rules to replace existing ones is expected to be introduced in the autumn, but most of the changes will not require legislation.

Sir Richard Scott, the Vice-Chancellor (head of the High Court's Chancery division), has been given the extra role of head of civil justice to mastermind the reforms. A group has already been set up in the Court Service Agency to implement the changes.

Extra resources will be needed to train judges and introduce computerised systems to monitor cases, but Lord Mackay hopes to cover most of the costs by savings from settling cases earlier. The reforms are intended to dovetail with plans to overhaul the legal aid scheme.

Launching his 369-page report, Access to Justice, Lord Woolf said: "We have to change from a situation where litigation is being conducted for the benefit of lawyers, to . . . it being conducted for the benefit of the litigant." The present system let down everybody, from individuals to multinationals, he said. "I think the Government will give this high priority."

Consumer and legal groups, including the Law Society and Bar Council, welcomed the proposals, but warned the reforms would need to be properly piloted and resourced.

However, the Association of Personal Injury Lawyers said the proposals would deny injured people access to justice and increase inequality between them and defendants' insurance companies.

Research for Lord Woolf showed that for high court claims up to £12,500, one side's legal costs exceeded the value of the claim in 40 per cent of cases.

Europe sends back £500m

John Palmer in Brussels and Larry Elliott

THE Government's beleaguered Euroenthusiasts received a much-needed boost last week when Brussels revealed that a massive underspend last year will allow it to pay back more than £500 million into Treasury coffers.

The windfall — part of a £7 billion repayment to all 15 European Union members — will swell the Government's finances and help cushion spending departments from reductions deemed necessary to ensure pre-election budget tax cuts.

While the European Commission decision will make it easier for Germany and France to achieve the tough conditions for monetary union, it will also allow the Chancellor, Kenneth Clarke — the Cabinet's leading pro-European — to mount a counter-offensive against the vocal Eurosceptic wing of his party.

The repayment will offset at least half the £1 billion cost this year of culling cattle after the BSE scare, and will be exploited to dampen anti-European sentiment following the resignation of the Treasury minister, David Heathcoat-Amory.

Although Britain was once the second-largest net contributor to the EU budget, it is now one of the smallest, partly because Britain is one of the poorest countries in the EU.

The decision by Brussels to repay about 10 per cent of the annual EU budget could be followed by a further bonanza next year if, as expected, the EU continues to spend well below its permitted ceiling.

The underspend reflects reforms in the Common Agricultural Policy, and the virtual disappearance of Europe's food surpluses. In addition, economic aid to eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union has been less than forecast.

"The simple truth is that everyone's top priority now is to be in shape for monetary union, and this is showing up in the debate about European Union spending," a senior German diplomat said. "We may have to go through this budget trauma for a year or two before we can look again at longer-term spending plans for the European Union."

Confirmation of the big repayment came as EU budget ministers struck an accord slashing £2 billion from the 1997 budget. The Commission had proposed an overall 3 per cent increase, but most EU governments wanted a freeze in the £65 billion budget. The agreement prevents, for the first time, a real increase in annual spending.

The move could mean severe cutbacks in promised spending on social policy, energy development, consumer protection, the environment and development aid. Any reductions will be opposed by European Parliament members, although governments say expenditure will hardly be affected because spending remains below budget.

● The Treasury's bid to put the squeeze on spending ministers this autumn was given weighty backing last week by an International Monetary Fund report on the British economy, which called for expenditure cuts and no Budget giveaway.

With the clamour on the Conservative right mounting for income tax reductions in November, Chancellor Kenneth Clarke took the unprecedented step of publishing the results of the IMF's 10-day investigation into the UK conducted this month.

According to the IMF, infrastructure projects have borne too much of the recent cutbacks, and current spending needs to be targeted for reductions. "There appears to be no scope for tax cuts in the forthcoming Budget," it says.

In Brief

MARDI GRA, the bomb-maker who has attempted to extort millions of pounds from Barclays Bank, has turned his attention to Sainsbury's supermarkets, Scotland Yard revealed.

THE Crown Prosecution Service faced criticism for "bungling" the investigation into the Marchioness riverboat disaster after it closed the file on the tragedy because there was insufficient evidence to institute further criminal proceedings.

THE Princess of Wales was left bereft of senior advisers after Jane Atkinson, her key media aide, resigned six months before the end of her contract.

COT deaths could be reduced by two-thirds if smokers with newborn babies gave up the habit, according to a government-funded report.

THE Chief Constable of West Yorkshire, Keith Hellawell, called for brothels to be legalised, saying that licensed brothels would get prostitutes off the streets, allow health checks, and mean earnings could be taxed.

A SCOTTISH judge criticised the Roman Catholic Church for covering up evidence for more than 20 years that a priest had sexually abused teenage boys.

AN ALLEGATION by the failed lottery bidder Richard Branson that he had been the subject of a bribery attempt was dismissed in a report by the lottery's regulator, Peter Davis.

LIEUTENANT Colonel Colin Mitchell — former commander of the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders, and Tory MP — has died, aged 70.

ALMOST 2,000 women school meals workers were awarded more than £1 million because the former Cleveland county council cut their weekly pay by between £5 and £50 to beat private rivals when tendering for the service.

THE Government is to review the use of plastic bullets by the police in Northern Ireland along with the RUC's handling of marches and parades.

SIR Peter Hall, who founded the Royal Shakespeare Company, has been appointed artistic director at the Old Vic Theatre in London. He is to establish a repertory company with a nucleus of 15 actors.

No hiding place from the bomber

IT COULD just as easily have happened anywhere — in Manchester, Tokyo or Colombo for example — for no city in the world today is safe from the bomber. It could have been for any cause, for obsessive madness now performs on a global stage. But the fact that it has happened at Atlanta during the Olympic Games, in a city currently inhabited by more journalists and broadcasters than any other on the planet, means that it is an event which outrages the whole of mankind. Such a cruel assault is a shock to one's faith in human nature, eclipsing memories of Munich in 1972, because at least then the horrors seemed to have some deranged but vestigial connection with the real world. Even amid this most commercially exploitative of international gatherings, this bombing feels like a besmirching of the world's innocence.

There is no calculus of cruelty by which it is possible to say that one senseless killing is worse than another. There are shocked, bereaved and indignant people this week in places like Burundi, Indonesia and Turkey, for whom the events in Atlanta inevitably seem secondary. But for all their many faults, the Olympic Games remain one of the few practical expressions of global fellowship to have survived (more or less) this most destructive and intolerant of centuries. Compared with universal peace, justice and equality, doubtless the Olympics rank far down the list of ideal international aspirations. They are tarnished in many ways, but they are, in the end the embodiment of the good side of the human spirit. The bombing strikes right at the heart of the capacity for optimism about our future.

The most striking thing, at least from outside America, is the fact that this event puts the United States on a par with the rest of us. After the bombings of the World Trade Centre, Oklahoma City and TWA800 — not to mention the Waco siege and the whole Unabomber saga — the bombing of Atlanta helps to underline that ideological terrorism is America's problem too. The particular lesson of Atlanta is that a violent culture reaps what it sows, but there are no simple answers to violence. And it is inevitable that the British will experience some *schadenfreude* at the fact it has now happened in America, a country that has been particularly quick to lecture Britain about the ease with which our own problems could supposedly be solved. The reaction is instinctively and unconditionally sympathetic, but there is also a voice that says "At last they know what we're talking about".

We have to acknowledge that the more seriously the world takes the Olympic Games, the more they are likely to reflect the world and become a target themselves. The Olympics provide an instant theatre in which the determined fanatic can secure a worldwide audience, inside or outside the arena.

The weekend's events will have been watched with particular anxiety in Sydney, host city of the next Olympic Games in 2000. Australians will instinctively assume that Centennial Park could not happen in Sydney. But that is what they thought about Dunblane before the Port Arthur massacre, and the recent court case following the New South Wales back-packer serial killings only acts as a further reminder that Australia is not immune from any threat. The grim truth is that nowhere is entirely safe from lone men bent on violence, and that someone, somewhere, will see even the world's greatest sports festival as a justification for their own pathological anger.

The sickness of a tiger

INDONESIA has become, almost overnight, a huge question-mark in the heart of Southeast Asia. Doubts over President Suharto's health have fused with the visible evidence on the streets of popular unrest. The flaws in this much-touted advertisement for the Asian formula of authoritarianism plus globalisation are suddenly revealed. Ordinary people do not like the enormous disparities of income, the pervasive corruption, and the clumsy political repression that goes with it. The assumption that Suharto could lead his country into the next century looks naive or sycophantic: now the question is whether he can survive to the end of his current term.

Critics of the regime have long argued that Western governments have shown far too much indulgence for Suharto ever since he presided over the bloody anti-left purge of 1965-66 and engineered the removal of the late President Sukarno. Savage repression in East Timor — to which no one could shut their eyes — is too often regarded as an aberration, almost cancelled out by the "miracle" of rapid economic growth. Now it is time to submit conventional wisdom to much closer scrutiny. Is it just that an ageing leader (shaken by the recent death of a much-loved and dominant wife) has lost his grip? Or was there always something fundamentally wrong with the formula?

Suharto clearly made a tactical error in instigating the removal of Megawati Sukarnoputri (daughter of the former president) from the leadership of the Indonesian Democratic party (PDI). Long used to manipulating the tame "opposition", he failed to see that this would create an issue around which the emerging pro-democracy movement could take shape. Ironically, Megawati only entered politics three years ago at the behest of Surjadi, now her rival as PDI leader. She is now being discarded because she has done too well and might even run for the presidency in 1998. The hollowness of Indonesia's democratic façade could not be more evident. Yet the real significance is the way that this affair has become the catalyst for a much wider range of popular discontent. This year has seen a revival of student militancy and workers' demonstrations in which political issues are increasingly linked to economic complaints. Much of Indonesia's growth is based upon low wages and poor working conditions. Though living standards have improved for many in the past decade, the extent of corruption (most blatantly among Suharto's family and friends) provokes general anger. Significantly too, the leader of the powerful Muslim party of the Ulamas, Abdurrachman Wahid, has let it be known that he supports Megawati.

Those who have applauded the Indonesian model uncritically should look hard at the dissolution of other authoritarian regimes such as South Korea and Taiwan. The transition in recent years from straight military rule to guided technocracy creates new contradictions. Democracy deserves support as much in Indonesia as anywhere else, and it is shortsighted to back the regime that suppresses it. British sales of water-cannon — now being used to disperse demonstrators in Jakarta — and of dual-purpose Hawk jets, which have seen action over East Timor, are indefensible. History has a habit, sooner or later, of settling accounts. Suharto has long had a reputation for listening to soothsayers. Could there be a deeper reason for his unwise purge of Megawati? She is, after all, her father's daughter, and there are many thousands of unpropitiated ghosts from the Sukarno era, which was so bloodily destroyed.

What an idea!

AMAZING! Women horse-owners tend to prefer their steeds to their men! Asked how they'd choose if given an ultimatum, 73 per cent in a sample of 1,000 women who own horses say they would keep the horse rather than the man, according to a survey carried out for a new magazine called Gallop!. (Doesn't say who conducted the survey: Gallup!, perhaps!)

How many readers of Gallop!, we ask ourselves, would still buy the magazine had this title been merely Gallop, without that increasingly ubiquitous shriek stick? The problem here is more subtle than that of the Aberrant Apostrophe (as in Apple's and Cabbage's), so long cherished by greengrocers, but now spreading like bindweed through much of our public life. There is nothing grammatically wrong about calling your magazine Gallop! rather than Gallop, or Hello! instead of Hello, or OK!, or Here!. Live TV is another matter, but at least it's not Live TV!. But what baffles the Guardian Weekly — which, we would like to make clear, has no immediate plans to change to the Guardian Weekly! — is what publishers expect to gain. Perhaps they think it makes the product sound spicier. Perhaps it's the sort of idea that plays well in focus groups. Perhaps in the case of Gallop! it's specifically meant to represent the sort of invigorating jolt one experiences in the saddle when a gallop is under way. But now that the habit has entered the currency, worse may soon be under way. Socialist Workers, for instance, may be tempted to market a paper called Trot!. That could really shake John Major (or John Major!, as he'll probably be by then)!

A land split right down the middle

Martin Woollacott

WHEN the killing resumes in some part of Africa, Western countries slip into a familiar oscillation. They swing between blaming themselves and blaming Africans, between urging and opposing military intervention.

The problem is the usual one. It is not that we do not care but that we care in bursts, so that policy becomes a series of last-minute rescue efforts. Thus it is with Burundi, where a coup has underlined the general neglect of a crisis affecting a large area of Central Africa. That crisis endangers not only Burundi but Rwanda and Zaire.

A partly international war is being waged in the region between extremist Hutu groups and mixed Tutsi and Hutu governments. Rwanda still has a relatively moderate government; Burundi has had a mixed government caught between a Tutsi army and Tutsi political forces trying to maintain Tutsi power and physical security by covert means, and armed Hutu extremists.

The new regime there has endorsed the principle of ethnic peace, but is also calling up Tutsi youth for militia service. An intensified campaign against Hutu rebels is likely. The Tutsi-dominated security forces have failed to distinguish between Hutu forces and civilians in the past. It may be, therefore, that this coup is a disaster. But caution is advisable, since there already was a disaster in Burundi, and in the region as a whole. The problem is less that the international community has failed to act, than that it has failed in the management of the broader conflict.

When the Rwandan Patriotic Front's forces won in that country, the Hutu regime's troops, most of the leadership and up to a million of its people fled into Zaire, with some going to Burundi and other countries. In Zaire, unopposed and not much noticed by the international community, the Hutu leaders turned the refugee camps into a social base for war, apparently with President Mobutu's acquiescence.

They escaped the consequences of their well-deserved defeat in Rwanda. They ethnically cleansed that part of Zaire of Tutsis and of other ethnic groups. From there they have struck into Rwanda, killing government officials, and have offered training to the Hutus of Burundi.

Their influence on the Burundi rebels can only be of the most poisonous kind. The extremist Rwanda Hutus undoubtedly see this as a war that will end only with the overthrow of governments in Rwanda and Burundi and their replacement by regimes that would solve the Tutsi "question" by a combination of killing, displacement and oppression.

For all the atrocities Tutsis have carried out in Rwanda and Burundi, they must in the long run be more disposed to compromise, as well as more concerned with security. As minorities, they cannot otherwise survive. The perpetual oppression of the Hutu majority, whatever was tried in the past, is not a serious option now. Tutsis in Rwanda understand this well, Tutsis in Burundi, whose dominant position has only been diluted, less well. Hutu leaders, by contrast, *can* think in terms of getting rid of Tutsis, or of displacing them completely from all positions of power, privilege or wealth. Some still do, and they are calling the shots, literally, in Zaire, and parts of Burundi. They would do so again in Rwanda if they could. This war is not a senseless affair, or one in which outsiders should have no sympathies.

The international community would have done better to have prevented the creation of a Hutu extremist base in Zaire, to have pushed much harder for the return of refugees, and to have given far more funding to Rwandan government projects. There should have been more money and help for the war crimes tribunal, which has moved with terrible slowness.

Swifter justice would have signalled the end of a time when leaders, Hutu or Tutsi, could get away with murder. And a squaring of accounts would have helped relations between Tutsi and Hutu in Rwanda. To help Rwanda become as much a model of Tutsi-Hutu normalisation as possible, and to root out Hutu extremists in Zaire — these should have been the aims. Had they been achieved, the situation in Burundi would have been less dangerous. Instead, little was done about Zaire, while in Rwanda relations between the government and international agencies have been difficult.

Many have urged a peacekeeping force for Burundi. The UN secretary-general, Boutros Boutros-Ghali, first urged that one be prepared last year. He repeated his proposal to the Security Council in January, but the US, whose logistical resources are vital to any operation, was negative then and has remained reluctant.

A FORCE for Burundi has been on and off the agenda ever since African leaders, meeting at Arusha last month, secured agreement from the Burundi president and prime minister to the creation of such a force. Indeed, that agreement may have precipitated the coup.

Most Tutsi leaders have seen the introduction of an international force into Burundi as likely to lead to "their" army being disbanded or reorganised and have therefore resisted it. It was a proposal to make the army ethnically balanced that led to the 1993 coup and the assassination of the first freely elected, and first Hutu, president of Burundi.

The former US ambassador in Burundi, Robert Krueger, said in a cable that reached the press this spring that "in an obscure country in the heart of Africa, the killing is proportionately vastly heavier than what the cameras are covering [in Lebanon]; or indeed almost anywhere else". Burundi was suffering the equivalent of an Oklahoma City bombing every day, he calculated. Stephen Solarz, a former Congressman, has argued for the US to take the lead in an intervention, supplying everything but fighting troops.

If there is to be military intervention, it should be the instrument of a coherent policy. The painful evolution of Burundi's Tutsis has taken them to the point where they see that control of the armed forces cannot guarantee their security. The most significant fact about recent violence is that as many Tutsis as Hutus have died. The Tutsis are desperate, and desperation can sometimes open doors.

The land of the amateur bomber

In America a nut with a home-made bomb poses a more insidious threat than foreign fanatics, writes **Ian Katz**. Below, **Richard Norton-Taylor** and **Ian Black** report on how governments are combining forces in the war on an increasingly sophisticated foe



Soldiers inspect cars outside a garage in Atlanta as security is stepped up after the explosion in the Centennial Olympics Park

THIS time it was very different. After the World Trade Centre bombing, Americans shuddered with the realisation that international terrorism had arrived on US soil. After Oklahoma City, they were horrified to discover that their own country's wide open spaces harboured a threat just as chilling and indiscriminate. But after the weekend bombing in Atlanta, the shock had been replaced by dismay. Everywhere, the conversations were the same: oh no, not again.

There are plenty of reasons why the Olympic attack surprised few. The attractiveness of the Games as a terrorist target has been so widely reported that Americans might have been surprised if no one had tried to breach the event's $50 million defences. At the same time the boasts of organisers that Atlanta would be for two weeks "the safest place in the world" seemed almost to throw down the gauntlet to the men of terror.

On top of that, Americans have terror on the brain. The Atlanta bombing came barely 10 days after TWA flight 800 mysteriously burst into flame and plummeted into the ocean off Long Island, and just weeks after a car bomb ripped through a US barracks in Dhahran, Saudi Arabia, killing 19 American soldiers. Crash investigators insist they have not established the cause of the Flight 800 disaster but most Americans had reached their own conclusion long before the first pieces of wreckage had been fished from the Atlantic.

The readiness of Americans to accept that a US airliner might be bombed out of the sky, or, even more strikingly, shot down by a missile less than 100 miles from New York, showed emphatically that the penny of terrorism had finally dropped in the United States. People no longer react to news of the latest outrage with the bemused admission that they thought such things happened only in London or Jerusalem. Terrorism is now an American problem, too.

In fact, however, America's terrorist problem is very different to the one faced by the Israelis or the British. In the US and in Israel, the threat comes largely from known, highly organised groups with political agendas and rational, if irrationally pursued, objectives. It is possible, if difficult, to wage a war against Hamas or the IRA. Informers can be planted, intelligence gathered. The same applied to terror groups of the seventies such as the Red Brigades in Italy and the Baader-Meinhof gang in Germany.

But the terrorist threat facing the US is at once less coherent and more difficult to combat. It comes from without, and within, from hitherto unknown Islamic groups such as the self-styled Movement for Islamic Change, which claimed responsibility for last November's bomb attack on an American barracks in Riyadh, and from ingenious psychopaths such as the Unabomber, willing to wage an 18-year terror campaign in the name of a screwball ideology.

In the past, Americans were quick to point fingers abroad when terror struck. The World Trade Centre bombing showed them there was no shortage of Islamic fanatics willing to take massive risks to spill the blood of their imperialist nemesis.

But the reaction of officials and the public after the Atlanta bombing showed the lesson of Oklahoma City had stuck. The FBI said it was working on the assumption that the culprits were American. The caller, who had telephoned a warning shortly before the blast, sounded like "a white American male". The explosive device had been primitive, if deadly.

The chilling truth which the Atlanta bombing may come to confirm is that the US is now a nation of amateur terrorists. Massive, lethal bombings of the kind we are familiar with in Britain may be rare, but smaller, often botched, attacks have become commonplace. Just days after the TWA explosion, a pipe-bomb was found on the runway at Chicago's O'Hare airport. Barely a month passes without some small explosion outside a public building in Nevada, Arizona or Washington.

The number of terrorist plots thwarted by good police work or, more often, happenstance is just as chilling. Early last month it was the Viper Militia, a suitably menacing-sounding crew of rightwing fanatics which, the FBI claims, planned to mount a massive bombing campaign against government buildings. A few weeks earlier it was Kelly Sean Spencer, discovered with four pipe-bombs after an explosion in his Oklahoma motel room.

Back in April it was two militia men near Macon, Georgia, hoarding bomb-making equipment that may or may not have been earmarked for the Olympics. At the same time police routinely happen on arms caches that would equip an entire guerrilla army.

Most of America's new breed of home-grown terrorists are linked to the Patriot movement, a loose alliance of more than 800 extreme rightwing groups. The groups, as many as 400 of which characterise themselves as militias, are bound together by their loathing for the federal government and opposition to gun control. At the wilder shores of the movement, adherents believe the US government is trying to disarm ordinary Americans as part of a United Nations plot to take over the world.

Some believe merely that the US government has overstepped its authority, that it interferes in parts of people's lives that it was never mandated to regulate. After the botched FBI raids on Ruby Ridge and Waco, anger and suspicion hardened into hatred and paranoia.

But the FBI's list of domestic suspects will by no means be confined to members of the militia movement. The technology of terror is so cheap and readily available that almost any kook or criminal can set himself up as a one-man Baader-Meinhof gang. In December 1994 an out of work computer programmer planned to hold the New York subway hostage by threatening to detonate a series of firebombs on it. (His plan backfired, literally, when a device went off on his lap.)

Even as the FBI was celebrating the capture of the man they claim is the Unabomber, New York detectives were pressing on with their hunt for another serial bomber who has terrorised the city for more than a decade.

The pipe-bomb, the type of device reportedly used in the Atlanta attack, is the weapon of choice for this new breed of amateur terrorist. Made from household materials, the most basic of them are as easy to put together as a DIY bookcase. Almost every week there are reports of pipe-bombs being found by police. When detectives caught up with Herberto Seda, the so-called Zodiac killer, last month, they found a cache of them. Earlier this year one was found in the locker of a high school student in Providence, Rhode Island.

They may lack the organisation and know-how of the kind of terror groups we are more familiar with but America's freelance terrorists may be even tougher to fight. The US has always placed great faith in technology. Terrorism, Americans believed, could be beaten with more satellite pictures and fancier bomb-sniffing gizmos. But Atlanta had the biggest security force ever assembled on US soil and the most hi-tech equipment. They practised for nerve gas and nuclear attacks and hijacks. They wheeled out a command plane built for a nuclear war. But none of this, it seems, was a match for a few pieces of pipe.

Global battle to be joined against terrorism

INTERNATIONAL efforts to combat terrorism were placed at the top of the political agenda this week by governments of some of the most powerful countries amid warnings that the nature of the threat has changed beyond recognition.

With the bombing at the Atlanta Olympics, the apparent downing by a bomb of TWA flight 800 and a sudden resurgence of domestic terrorism on their minds, foreign and interior ministers from the United States, Canada, Britain, France, Germany, Italy, Japan and Russia met in Paris to map out a response. Despite the shock of the Atlanta blast, they have had a degree of success with some recent initiatives, such as the arrest in France of suspected members of the Basque separatist group, ETA.

"The fight against ETA terror is naturally a Spanish affair, but also a French one," said France's interior minister, Jean-Louis Debré, driving home the core message of the meeting.

Diplomats said the ministers were expected to approve 25 recommendations for international action, including better sharing of intelligence, a crackdown on fundraising, and the marking of explosives and other sensitive materials to aid detection. Because of terrorism's increasingly diffuse and transnational nature, calls for closer inter-governmental co-ordination were anticipated.

As the state-sponsored organisations of the 1970s have given way to amorphous networks — especially of radical Islamic groups — so attention has shifted to closing loopholes in national asylum and immigration laws that allow terrorists to operate across frontiers.

Britain is advertising practical measures that include amending a United Nations convention whereby anyone planning or funding terrorism can be refused asylum. It also intends to make it an offence to engage in conspiracy with others — or to incite others — to commit terrorist offences abroad.

Britain is anxious to play a key role because it has been accused of providing a safe haven for Islamic fundamentalists.

"All countries fear terrorism to varying degrees," said Bruce Hoffman, head of the Centre for the Study of Terrorism and Political Violence at St Andrews university. "But just as one country's terrorist is another's freedom fighter, so one country's terrorist threat is another country's distraction which they wish would go away."

Experience has shown that, despite denials, democratic governments have engaged in clandestine contacts with terrorist groups — the British government's secret talks with the IRA are one example.

And Britain's new anti-terrorist proposals have already prompted concern among officials of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, who fear that they could be used against genuine asylum-seekers.

"Proposals to criminalise dissidents from other countries have real human rights concerns, particularly because there are a number of regimes all round the world who are actively involved in torturing and killing their citizens," said John Wadham, the director of the civil liberties group Liberty.

The problem is recognised in a Home Office report. Some countries have no offence of conspiracy, so the situation could arise of a prosecution in Britain for activities relating to foreign countries where they would not be illegal.

Tighter security measures at airports are also part of the anti-terrorist agenda. In the wake of the TWA disaster, President Clinton last week announced new airline security measures, warning they would be expensive and inconvenient.

"Physical measures will make it more difficult for terrorists but will not stop the threat," said Dr Hoffman. "The challenge for the terrorist is to overcome the new measures — it is never-ending."

He points to new terrorist techniques, including the use of microchips in bombs to extend timer mechanisms, and the moulding of plastic explosives into thin, easily hidden sheets.

Current moves on terrorism began in December 1995 at a meeting in Ottawa of the Group of Seven countries. They gained momentum at the Sharm al-Sheikh summit in March, convened after a spate of suicide bombings in Israel. It took the attack on US servicemen in Dhahran, Saudi Arabia, to galvanise international efforts, leading to a ringing declaration at the G7 Lyon summit last month.

"The global response is the only possible response because you've got the globalisation of the threat," one expert said.



GUARDIAN WEEKLY
August 4 1996

No one prospered more than the Suharto clan as Indonesia escaped from grinding poverty, writes **Paul Hunt**

First Family takes care of business

FOUR government ministers mingled in a crowd of thousands at the launch in Jakarta of the Cakra and Nanngala, characters in the Ramayana epic whose names now adorn two sleek saloon cars. Organisers laid on statuesque models, traditional *wayang* puppet shows, dancers in old Javanese costume and a banquet for the hungry. Yet the host of the party, Bambang Trihatmodjo, second son of Indonesia's President Suharto, hardly cracked a smile.

Local businessmen know 42-year-old Bambang as a reticent person, short of social confidence, who keeps his feelings to himself. But it was tempting to link his dour demeanour on this occasion to the car wars with his siblings that threaten the short-term profits of his enterprise.

Bambang is sinking a cool $1 billion into making the two saloons in a joint venture with South Korea's Hyundai for a cost to customers of between $17,000 and $20,000. Unfortunately his flamboyant younger brother, Hutomo Mandala Putra, generally known as Tommy, pulled a fast one on him.

A decree issued by President Suharto in February allows 33-year-old Tommy to market a "national car" made entirely in South Korea without paying the usual duties on imported parts or an onerous 35 per cent luxury tax that hits other producers. As a result, the Timor, as Tommy's car is named, will hit the market in three months' time, selling for about half the cost of his brother's.

The ruling stirred a mixture of derision and indignation. "An example of nepotism and irrational decision-making on a grand scale," wrote David Roche of Independent Strategy, echoing a sentiment heard widely around the streets and offices of Jakarta. "It's a joke. They import a totally built-up car, sell it locally and pocket the tax break," fumed an Indonesian business consultant.

Far more is at stake than Bambang's or Tommy's profit margins. The saga of the national car has turned an unflattering spotlight on affairs at the heart of a family dynasty that now shapes the fate of 190 million people in the world's fourth most populous state, sprawling across 13,000 islands, two time zones and a vast wealth of natural resources.

The controversy could hardly have surfaced at a more sensitive time. An announcement last month that President Suharto would fly to Europe for medical checks sufficed to drop the Jakarta stock exchange 2.3 per cent, a sobering jolt for a market that had been top of the pops among emerging markets over much of the past six months.

The death in April of his wife of 48 years — and his closest confidante — only underlined Mr Suharto's own advancing years. After three decades of iron-fisted rule, trading democracy for order and economic development, the president, in the time-honoured tradition of Javanese monarchs, shows no sign of surrendering power or revealing whom he would pick as his heir should circumstances force him to do so.

"People are jittery," observes Rizal Ramli, an economist and consultant. "Power has increasingly been centralised round one man, so the possibility of change creates a lot of uncertainty."

Hanging in the balance are the economic and social achievements on which Mr Suharto has staked his claim to a place in history. Out of the political chaos and decay bequeathed by Sukarno, the charismatic first president of independent Indonesia he forced out of power, Mr Suharto has forged the basis of a prosperous future.

In the last 30 years, Indonesia has struggled out of grinding poverty into the lower ranks of the world's middle-income countries, notching up enviable growth and seemingly destined for ever more spectacular results. "The average Indonesian knows he is better off than he was five years ago and stands to be better off in five years' time," notes ING Barings' Bill Rolph.

No one has prospered more than the first family. The international airport you land at was built by Bambang, Indonesian analysts explain, mapping out the dimensions of one of the world's biggest business empires, with tentacles stretching to every corner of the economy.

The onward domestic flight you take is likely to be on the airline owned by Tommy, or the cab you take into the city may belong to eldest daughter Siti Hardiyanti Rukmana, known as Mbak (sister) Tutut. The toll road that takes you into the city was built by her.

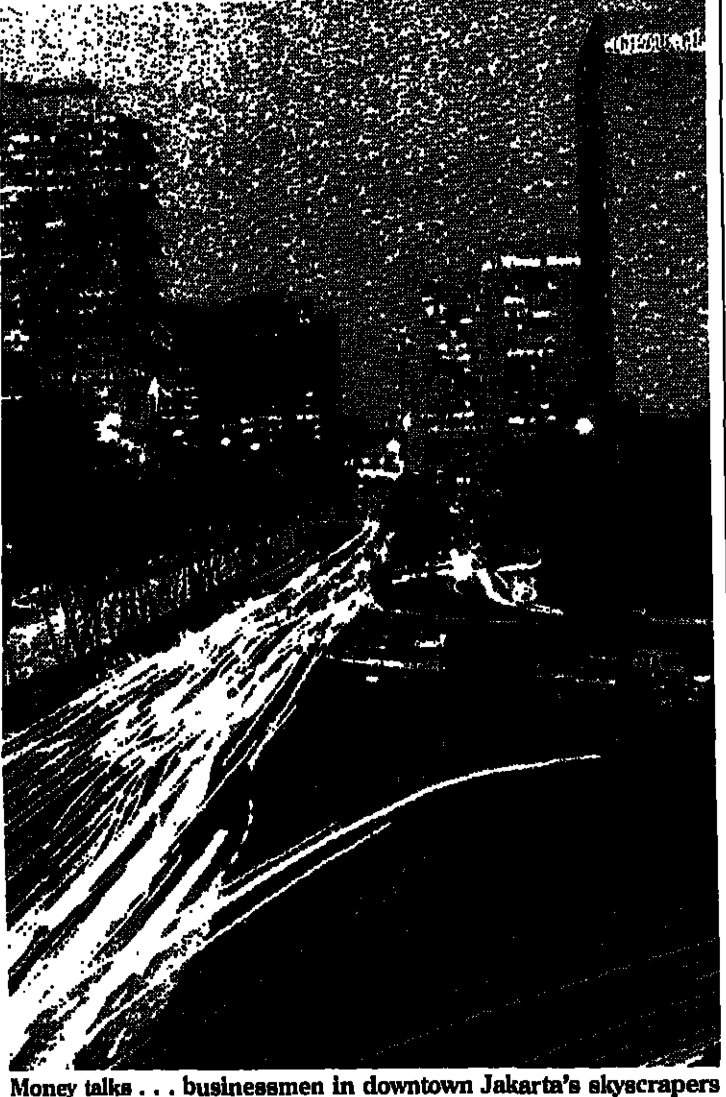
Eat noodles or drink Jakarta's bottled water, smoke a *kretek* (Indonesia's clove cigarette), buy a mobile phone or a Mercedes, watch three of the five television channels, stay in Jakarta's Grand Hyatt, one of its smartest hotels, or shop in the mall downstairs and you are contributing in some way to a business either owned by the family or by one of a tiny group of Chinese business magnates whose conglomerates are entwined with theirs.

Starting out from a modest trading company set up by Bambang 15 years or so ago, the children now market crude oil, run gas pipelines, ship liquefied natural gas and build billion-dollar petrochemical plants. F-16 fighters purchased from the US are said to have come in through one family enterprise, the export of birds' nests for Chinese soup go out through another.

"Are they the richest people in the world? No one knows," concludes a financial analyst. One estimate suggests they now control assets of $5 billion, another attributed to the CIA suggests the figure should be $30 billion. "It wouldn't surprise me," the analyst shrugs.

Local researchers tracing the confusing web of interests believe Bambang is involved in at least 140 companies, with net worth of $1.2 billion, and Tutut has links to 100 companies with even higher net worth of $2 billion. Tommy came in a distant third, linked to 70 companies, with net worth of some $600 million.

The children's dazzling business successes are a political headache. An acute difficulty confronting Mr Suharto as he ponders the possible candidates to succeed him, is finding anyone sufficiently loyal and forceful to protect the family's interests from the pressures most Indonesians predict will break them up or at least redistribute big chunks.



Money talks . . . businessmen in downtown Jakarta's skyscrapers are following the succession debate closely PHOTO: SERGIO DORANTES

An outpouring of popular support for ex-president Sukarno's daughter Megawati in recent weeks starkly underlines the problem. Her modest manners and unpretentious style is meat and drink to struggling workers and ambitious middle classes, weary of pervasive corruption and nursing long-smouldering resentment over the privileges of the children.

Heavy-handed military measures against Megawati have badly backfired, and served only to enhance her popularity. "Never before in the history of the New Order has there been such widespread support for an opposition figure," warns Rizal Ramli, the economics analyst.

LOCAL and foreign businessmen are now keenly conscious that the government's handling of this issue casts a shadow over the performance of the economy. Sitting in Jakarta skyscrapers a few miles from the action, bankers and businessmen were unaware of the beating administered by troops to pro-Megawati demonstrators earlier this month. A prompt dip on the Jakarta stock exchange, however, left no doubt of the impact of CNN film of the event on investors overseas.

Growing dependence on foreign funds to finance Indonesia's deficits leaves the economy more vulnerable to investor confidence than even a decade ago. "Capital inflows quickly could become capital outflows, putting pressure on the economy," the latest World Bank report drily observes.

If Mr Suharto and his children are sensitive to such concerns, they do not much show it. Far from slowing down their accumulation of projects and businesses, the children appear to be accelerating it.

And popular dissent on the streets of Indonesian cities would matter less to the business community if it were not for the hairline cracks that hawk-eyed analysts now detect in the structure of the New Order establishment as a result of sibling rivalry over the spoils of development.

The national car is a case in point. Bambang, less than pleased at Tommy's coup, lobbied for identical privileges, to no avail. Tutut also reportedly jumped into the fray, pitching for a car venture of her own. Indonesia would soon have six national cars, local wags joked, one for each of Mr Suharto's offspring.

Japanese car manufacturers who hitherto have dominated the market and American manufacturers trying to break into it are, not surprisingly, unamused. The Japanese, in particular, may have thought the $1 billion worth of annual aid that their country gives might have earned a more sympathetic hearing. Both are threatening to fight the case in the World Trade Organisation.

The issue is even less amusing for Indonesians, who are particularly troubled by the lack of sound advice offered to the president and the controversial decisions coming down from him. "We feel what is at stake is our national survival. The format of the New Order designed to answer the challenges of the 1960s and 1970s is no longer capable of dealing with challenges ahead," asserts Dewi Fortuna Anwar, a political scientist. "President Suharto has done something quite spectacular. It is unfortunate his rather short-sighted favours for immediate family members could actually undermine the good things he has done."

Bank spends $12m to avoid new Barings

Mark Milner

THE Bank of England last week unveiled an $12 million-a-year package of measures intended to boost its supervision and surveillance operations in the wake of the Barings investment bank collapse.

The Bank's deputy governor, Howard Davies, said he believed the reforms would make it "more likely" that the Bank would be able to detect problems such as the one that brought down Barings. But it did not mean that bank failures were a thing of the past.

No system could prevent bank failures, he said. "Banks are in the business of taking risks. If they did not, there would be no point in having them. The aim is to create a banking supervision system which, as far as possible, reduces the risk of the failure of individual institutions."

The Bank's proposals are based on a report from consultants Arthur Andersen that looked at how the Bank conducts its supervisory and surveillance functions. The report, which followed a nine-month study, concluded that while the Bank should keep its existing system "where supervisors exercise informed judgement within improved standards and guidelines", a series of reforms should be implemented.

These included more resources, which could mean an additional 100 new posts to add to the existing 385 in the division, including up to 45 more supervisors; better training; more effective use of information technology; and tighter links between the aims of supervision and the process by which it was carried out.

A key part of the reform programme will be a risk assessment model, now being tested, which will allow supervisors to draw up what Mr Davies described as a "risk map" of individual institutions.

A spokesman for the Treasury said: "The Bank believes it can afford the increase [in supervisory costs] from within existing resources over the next two years because of savings elsewhere. The [cost] implications for later years will be addressed nearer the time."

Labour's City spokesman, Alistair Darling, gave the reform package a guarded welcome, while warning that there was a limit to what the Bank of England, as the regulator, could do.

FOREIGN EXCHANGES

	Sterling rates July 29	Sterling rates July 22
Australia	1.9768-1.9787	1.9589-1.9610
Austria	16.22-16.23	16.20-16.21
Belgium	47.52-47.55	47.46-47.60
Canada	2.1375-2.1389	2.1189-2.1207
Denmark	8.90-8.90	8.88-8.89
France	7.82-7.82	7.79-7.80
Germany	2.3062-2.3077	2.3028-2.3044
Hong Kong	12.04-12.05	11.98-11.99
Ireland	0.9618-0.9630	0.9619-0.9634
Italy	2,376-2,378	2,334-2,337
Japan	168.54-168.69	166.80-167.03
Netherlands	2.5891-2.5907	2.5846-2.5865
New Zealand	2.2413-2.2436	2.2279-2.2305
Norway	9.92-9.94	9.89-9.91
Portugal	237.24-237.47	236.76-236.98
Spain	196.32-196.43	194.49-194.72
Sweden	10.23-10.25	10.21.10.23
Switzerland	1.8797-1.8817	1.8727-1.8750
USA	1.5577-1.5582	1.5496-1.5502
ECU	1.2260-1.2268	1.2202-1.2213

FTSE100 Share Index down 2.6 at 3678.8. FTSE 250 Index down 4.9 at 4226.1. Gold no change at $384.80.

GUARDIAN WEEKLY
August 4 1996

The Washington Post

Somber Atlanta Reels in Wake of Bomb

William Gildea in Atlanta

THE 'round-the-clock celebration in Centennial Olympics Park and in the downtown streets here gave way early on Saturday morning and throughout the day to an eerie stillness punctuated by the sound of sirens and surveillance helicopters. On the *ninth day of the Olympic Games*, rain and gray skies heightened the somber feeling that cloaked this once-joyful city.

The park, a gathering place for the public that had been jam-packed during the first week of the Games, stood empty and several square blocks nearby were sealed off as police took tight control. Yellow crime-scene tape blocked access to the park and barricades were erected in the surrounding rain-glistened streets, which were strewn with debris that otherwise would have been removed by cleaning crews.

"It's not going to stop anything, but it's going to quell the spirit," said Kevin Church of nearby Stone Mountain, a street vendor on International Boulevard one block from the explosion, who reflected the mood of a heartbroken city. "It's definitely a setback. It's your worst fear. The spirit was growing — it really was. I love it here. I hope when people think of Atlanta they won't think of the explosion."

When people think of the Munich Olympics, they often think first of the September 1972 tragedy that resulted in the deaths of 11 Israeli athletes and coaches after the storming of the relatively lightly guarded Olympic Village by Palestinian terrorists. That massacre changed forever the way Olympics and other international events were staged, heightening security to the extent that the Olympic Village at Georgia Tech is virtually a prison to protect against guerrilla barbarism.

No one here equated the explosion with the massacre of the Israelis in 1972. "It could have been a lot worse," Church said. "Athletes could have been involved." Still, residents, visitors and athletes seemed dazed.

Thousands who were not at Olympic venues walked somberly through those city streets still open to pedestrians. Others stood behind police barricades, simply looking down International Boulevard, which had been teeming with people and now was sealed off and starkly empty.

"You look down there and you look up there," said Don Summerlin, pointing to the street clogged with people behind him while he stood at a barricade facing the vacant blocks. "I said, 'That's got to be where the park is, where the bomb was.' It got my attention."

Atlantans consider these Olympics distinctly their own, because so many of them took part in the preparation, and now their pride has been wounded, their disappointment openly apparent. The park itself was conceived as a place not only where people from around the world could gather, but also where Atlantans could offer what they consider their unique hospitality.

A.D. Frazier, a top official with the Atlanta Committee for the Olympic Games, described the spirit of both Atlantans and visitors from around the world as "palpable" and "astonishingly positive." Billy Payne, head of ACOG, told reporters, "We must rejuvenate the spirit of Atlanta." Centennial Olympic Park was Payne's brainchild, a place where everyone could gather free of charge and celebrate the Games. The site featured corporate exhibits, concerts and informal camaraderie, happy conversations among strangers, the exchanging of pins — a common practice in international sports events. Payne envisioned the park as the heart of the Games — and that's what it was until 1:20 a.m. on Saturday, when the explosion literally rocked the neighborhood.

A sense of urgency but not panic ensued as people were ordered out of the area by police. Hundreds already were leaving of their own accord, some pausing only to find friends or relatives from whom they had been momentarily separated.

In many instances, vendors within a block or two of the explosion ordered their employees to leave immediately and closed their establishments themselves as police swept through to ensure that the area was being vacated completely.

Ironically, the explosion was possible because of the park's easy access, which Payne intended so that people might get together easily and Atlanta could help define itself as a friendly place to heighten its profile internationally. The park is in no way secured like the venues, and stands starkly in contrast to the fortress-like Olympic Village.

Ron Stallworth, a building engineer who lives in nearby Haralson County, stood in a garage doorway in the cordoned-off area, surveying the surreal scene. "People are angry," he said. "They're a little upset. But I don't think it's going to stop 'em. They're going about business in as normal a way as possible.

"The Olympics are very special to them because that's where all the people come together," Stallworth said, sensing that the terror would fail to destroy the momentum of life that's been a part of these Games.



Injured and shocked rock concert-goers are given help after a pipe bomb hurled shrapnel through the crowds gathered at the Atlanta Centennial Olympics Park on Saturday

Explosion Reveals Chinks in the Armor

Thomas Heath in Atlanta

ABOUT 1 a.m. on Saturday, the Atlanta Police Department received a bomb threat from a downtown pay phone. Target: Centennial Olympics Park.

At the same time, across town, a Georgia Bureau of Investigation agent found a suspicious green duffle bag and called bomb experts.

During the next 20 minutes, hundreds of people milled about the area where the bag was located. Then the bomb, made of three galvanized pipes wired to a timer, exploded in a rain of nails as the area was being cleared, killing one person and injuring 111 others. A television cameraman also died of a heart attack while rushing to cover the incident.

Saturday's explosion highlights the nagging vulnerabilities in the massive Olympics security system, which cost $227 million and includes 30,000 law enforcement personnel policing the largest peacetime event in history. In this case, the warning from the 911 call may not have been passed through the various layers of communication in a speedy manner.

"There was a . . . delay before [the 911] information was passed on," said Woody Johnson, FBI special agent in charge of Atlanta. Johnson said his agency is "going to evaluate" whether police moved fast enough.

If the police should have moved more quickly, it's the second glitch in the security system since the Olympics began on July 19. A man dressed as a security guard and armed with a loaded .45 caliber handgun embarrassed officials when he penetrated layers of checkpoints at the opening ceremonies and reached a seat in Olympic Stadium. He was discovered before the ceremonies started.

If the determination is that the response was too slow, part of the reason could be the patchwork of police agencies and the complex coordination system responsible for letting the left hand know what the right hand is doing.

If something happens on state property, an umbrella of 25 state agencies and 11 federal agencies is responsible. On city ground, Atlanta Police Department is in charge. Inside Olympic venues, the Atlanta Committee for the Olympic Games (ACOG) has paid staff and volunteers to enforce house rules. If it's a federal crime, call the FBI or the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms.

"It's not your typical Atlanta day when you call the Atlanta P.D. and they arrive in three minutes and take the bomb," said a federal law enforcement official who asked not to be identified.

"When you have such a large number of agencies and such a huge event, coordination becomes a particular challenge," said ACOG security spokesman Lynn May.

The games have attracted millions of spectators, 10,000 athletes, and police from around the world. Police have already received about 100 bomb threats, none of which were genuine until Saturday.

With the bigness comes complaints, and many of the foreign police officers who have assisted in the Games have expressed unhappiness with living conditions and the management of Games security. Some have walked off in the past week over disorganization and broken promises, according to several officers interviewed on Saturday.

Early in the games Mayor Bill Campbell boasted that the massive security apparatus in place would make Atlanta "the safest place in the world."

On Saturday, however, Campbell struck a different note. "I thought the security was extensive, but it ultimately is impossible to protect this country from terrorism," he said.

A Better Course in Bosnia

EDITORIAL

A LARGE, wobbly policy edifice is being built on America's part in pushing Radovan Karadzic out of his official presidential office and out of his ruling-party leadership slot in the Serb-dominated region of Bosnia.

On that basis the United States is saying that the elections that were to take place by September 14 now may legitimately go forward. And on that basis, the United States is saying that American forces, and presumably the whole international peacekeeping force, may be removed safely by the end of the year.

There is no denying the dramatic diplomacy of American Bosnia-peace negotiator Richard Holbrooke in coming back briefly from private life to help roll over the indicted war criminal Karadzic. Holbrooke enlisted the weight of Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic and made Karadzic's retirement from party office and public life a condition of the party's electoral participation. But Karadzic's undemocratic, rabidly nationalistic party now has been licensed, in effect, to contest the elections. It will do so, moreover, under leaders hand-picked by him.

And his accused partner in genocide, Ratko Mladic, by omission has been confirmed as the Bosnian Serb military commander. Both may consider themselves in an improved position to evade trial at The Hague.

It is true, as Holbrooke said, that as long as the NATO-led peace force of 50,000 troops was unprepared to nab Karadzic, Milosevic had little reason to arrest his protege-turned-rival himself and "launch a Serb civil war." But under the new status quo, Karadzic's party stands to prevail in the September elections, and to emerge acclaiming itself as the people's choice. It would then be in a position to add its voice to the many others, including the United States', calling for the peacekeepers' prompt departure.

With the peacekeepers gone, Bosnia's Serb and Croat statelets would be more or less free to pursue ethnic partition, and to ignore the Dayton promise to preserve at least the framework of an eventual unitary state. The United States would end up confirming the very principle of ethnic cleansing it meant to combat.

The better course is to arrest Karadzic and Mladic, to encourage the more moderate elements among the Bosnian Serbs and to arrange some sequel to the international peacekeeping force in order to lower the temperature while the country's institutions are being constructed.

Otherwise, it will appear that the Clinton administration's interest in Bosnia is simply to get it off the screen by the time of the American elections, no matter what was agreed at Dayton and what happens to Bosnia.

Tamil Rebels Resurgent in Sri Lanka

Kenneth J. Cooper in Colombo

THE ETHNIC separatist Tamil Tiger rebels have bounced back since government troops forced them from their stronghold in the town of Jaffna last December and then from the rest of the northern Jaffna Peninsula in May.

The rebels' retreat into the jungle before more and better-armed troops raised questions about the fighting ability of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, who have sought an independent state to insulate Sri Lanka's mostly Hindu Tamil minority from discrimination by the predominantly Buddhist Sinhalese majority.

President Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunga and Deputy Defense Minister Anuruddha Ratwatte began to talk of finishing off — by the end of this year or the next — a 13-year rebellion that has claimed more than 43,000 lives and slowed economic growth in this tropical island nation off India's southern tip.

But the optimistic projections came before the resurgent Tamil Tigers inflicted on government forces their worst defeat of the civil war last week, overrunning an isolated military base in the north-east and apparently killing more than 1,000 soldiers in a battle that has raged ever since.

As government reinforcements entered the devastated camp last week, two bomb blasts on a commuter train just outside Colombo, the capital, killed at least 63 persons in what appeared to be the rebels' violent way of marking the anniversary of the war's beginning in July 1983.

The combination of the military defeat at Mullaittivu and the terrorist bombing in the middle-class Colombo suburb of Dehiwala suggested that the Tigers have regrouped and regained the initiative.

The Sri Lankan military hustled to demonstrate anew its supremacy on the battlefield by launching an offensive last week, to capture Kilinochchi, the northern town where the rebels reestablished their administrative center after being flushed from the Jaffna Peninsula. Kilinochchi, just south of the peninsula, was where Tigers took hundreds of bodies of dead soldiers and handed them over to the International Red Cross to show off their conquest of Mullaittivu.

Government troops from the Elephant Pass base, backed by armor, artillery and air cover, had moved to the fringes of Kilinochchi at the weekend, the Reuter news agency reported. Military officials said 15 soldiers were killed and 60 wounded in the advance.

Aid workers, except for 30 associated with the Red Cross, evacuated the town. The government imposed an indefinite curfew in the area and urged residents to take refuge in schools and places of worship.

A Defense Ministry statement said the offensive was undertaken "with the aim of destroying [Tamil Tiger] terrorists and their strongholds in the mainland of the Northern Province," a clear reference to Kilinochchi.

A Western diplomatic source predicted that government forces would capture the town, based on superior arms and firepower, but suggested a victory would lead to an occupation that would further stretch a military already spread thinly around the country.

The Tamil Tigers, among the world's most disciplined and effective insurgent groups, have specialized in well-planned and well-executed surprise attacks on military and civilian targets. The government's most overwhelming defeat of the civil war before Mullaittivu came in November 1993, when rebels overran the Pooneryn base south of Jaffna and killed 700 troops in a similar night assault.

The Tamil Tigers appear to have adopted a strategy of spreading their attacks around the country in an effort to keep government forces off balance and divert them from their set military objectives. Besides sporadic assaults on military patrols and Sinhalese settlements in the east, the rebels launched an unsuccessful attack on Colombo's port in April and threatened summer visitors to Yala National Park in the southeast, far from the war zone.

Burundi's Peasants Want Peace

Stephon Buckley in Songo

ALONG the winding road that slices through the lush landscape leading toward this village 60 miles south of Burundi's capital, Bujumbura, children lie on the grass, waving as cars whip by.

In the middle of the road, cow herders snap at their cattle with sticks, rushing them out of the way of oncoming vehicles. In fields, farmers hack at the soil with their hoes; others pick tea.

In Burundi's countryside, where 85 percent of this small central African country's people live, peace has prevailed since the military carried out a coup last week, ostensibly to try to halt bloodshed between the country's Hutu majority and Tutsi minority.

Sporadic fighting between Burundi's overwhelmingly Tutsi army and Hutu rebels has taken the lives of more than 150,000 Burundians since 1993. In some months, fighting kills as many as 1,000 people, mostly civilians.

Last week the army overthrew the country's Hutu president, who has taken refuge in the American ambassador's house. In his place, the military installed Pierre Buyoya, a former major who led a military government from 1987 to 1993. Buyoya said he has taken power "to restore peace and security for Burundi."

The peasants do not know if Buyoya, a Tutsi, can, or will, bring peace. But they do know that rebel raids and the army's reprisal massacres have exhausted them.

Without peace, they cannot cultivate their fields. They cannot feed their children or send them to school. They cannot pick their tea and coffee.

"Whoever is running the country needs to bring peace," said Nestor Ntahonkuriye, 40, a tailor. "The peasants need to live, to live in peace." Ntahonkuriye sat outside at his sewing machine, tape measure around his neck, a plastic bag stuffed with fabric at his side, his ashen left foot pressing the machine's lever as he sewed a pair of pants.

"The leaders come and they go," Ntahonkuriye said. "What is unfortunate is that there is war."



A soldier stands guard as Burundi's new leader, President Pierre Buyoya, addresses the press last week PHOTO: CORINNE DUFKA

Burundians are used to coups and attempted coups. Since the country of 6 million won independence from Belgium 34 years ago, its people have suffered through a half-dozen toppled governments and at least as many aborted coups. The fighting that devastates Burundi today is the fallout of the assassination of its first Hutu president, Melchior Ndadaye, in a failed military coup in 1993. Ndadaye had beaten Buyoya in July 1993 in the nation's first free presidential elections.

"Whoever leads us in the right way, that is who is acceptable," Leopold Bangurambona, 30, a potato farmer, said diplomatically.

Bangurambona, a shy man who flicked bits of earth from his fingers as he spoke, was preparing his potato field for planting, cracking into the rich dark soil with his hoe. Like most Hutu farmers, he toils on land owned by Tutsis, who for decades have controlled the country's economic and political life.

Bangurambona insisted that the fighting in Burundi does not emanate from Hutu peasants hating Tutsis. Instead, he blamed the country's debilitated state on politicians lusting for power.

"We do not hate each other," he said. "It is the politicians who are misunderstanding each other. If they try to understand each other, and share the power, maybe the problems will end."

Killing Off the Root Causes of Juvenile Crime

COMMENT
David S. Broder

IT IS a paradox of current politics that the further removed an official is from the front lines of the war on crime, the tougher he is likely to talk. That is particularly the case when it comes to violence by juveniles, a genuine problem that Americans rightly find alarming.

When Republican presidential candidate Bob Dole talked about the issue in a radio address last month, he promised to crack down on these "merciless criminals capable of committing the most vicious acts for the most trivial reasons: a pair of sneakers or a football jersey."

When President Clinton responded a few days later, he spoke in ominous tones of the fact that in the last two decades, "the number of homicides by teens who have guns has tripled."

Both said prosecutors should have much more leeway to try juveniles charged with serious crime as adults. "If a teen-ager commits a crime as an adult," Clinton said, "he should be prosecuted as an adult." Before leaving the Senate, Dole introduced legislation to allow adult prosecutions of people as young as 13 and the death penalty for 16-year-olds.

But when a cross-section of police chiefs was surveyed recently by Northeastern University's Center for Criminal Justice Policy on the effectiveness of four different approaches to reducing crime and violence, the least favored option was the one Dole and Clinton have endorsed — and many governors already have put into effect. Only 14 percent of the 540 chiefs surveyed chose the policy of trying more juveniles as adults and sentencing more of them to adult prisons.

About the same number said hiring additional police officers would be the best tool and a somewhat larger group said the priority should be making parents legally liable when their children commit crimes.

But three out of every four big city chiefs and three out of five in the overall sample said the best way to reduce crime and violence is to increase investment in programs that help all youngsters get a good start.

These findings were reported at a Washington press briefing recently by a newly formed advocacy group, "Fight Crime: Invest in Kids," run by veteran liberal activist Sanford Newman. The police chiefs of Chicago and Buffalo, the former chiefs of New York City, Detroit and Washington and the head of the largest police organization, the Fraternal Order of Police, attended.

A cynic might argue that the liberals and the chiefs — who are mostly mayoral appointees — have just found new rhetoric to support the old programs that pump federal money into the cities. But that view will not withstand the hardheaded sincerity of people like Gil Kerlikowske, the Buffalo police chief, who said "the preventive programs are getting lost because everyone [in politics] is trying to grow hair on his chest in this election year."

What he means is shown by the juvenile crime bill Dole introduced. It would allocate $100 million a year for prevention programs run by community-based groups, and four times that amount for investigating, prosecuting and jailing juvenile offenders. But the whole $500 million would be paid for by cutting "social spending provisions" of the 1994 crime bill, including intensive after-school and family counseling programs.

James Alan Fox, the Northeastern University center's director, presented studies from the criminology literature showing that intensive early intervention programs can reduce the later delinquency and criminal behavior of at-risk youths by up to 80 percent.

I was skeptical about these case studies. But John J. DiUlio Jr., of Princeton, a scholar much admired by conservatives and who was not part of this group, told me that "the more scientific the study, the stronger the link and the more positive the results . . . Programs that get responsible adults involved with at-risk kids can reduce later delinquency and crime."

Teen-agers now have the highest arrest rate for violent offense, and in the next decade the number of teen-agers will explode — there are now 39 million children under 10.

Prosecuting today's teen criminals as adults may satisfy current political pressures, but we better be serious about preventing their younger brothers from becoming criminals — or we are in big trouble.

West Coast Can't Ignore Homeless

Sharon Waxman

ROBERT KAHN was even more of a nuisance in jail than out of it. Outside, all the 49-year-old activist did was feed the homeless without a permit, a crime that got him sentenced to 60 days. Inside, he circulated petitions, entertained journalists, demanded a law library and enjoyed martyr status as the voice of the persecuted poor.

So officials kicked him out about a month early. But in or out, Kahn is a reminder to San Franciscans of a complex problem that simultaneously mars the city's sophisticated image and weighs on its conscience: homelessness.

Wherever one turns, men and women are lying in the gutter. A block from City Hall, a drunk flashes his genitals at the traffic. At United Nations Plaza, a man in a frizzy wig emerges noisily from a public toilet as a dishevelled woman accosts passers by with an aggressive, "Hey! You have a good one, my brother."

Many other cities — New York most prominently — have adopted hardline attitudes toward society's most visible poor. To circumvent a 1993 appeals court ruling that begging is a form of free speech, municipalities have passed laws banning roadside begging, sidewalk sitting and soliciting near cash machines. In the District of Columbia an "aggressive panhandling" law was passed in 1994, which made it a crime to aggressively request money.

San Francisco Mayor Willie Brown, in office since January, has promised a more compassionate approach, abolishing his predecessor's unpopular method of aggressive policing to chase the homeless from the urban centre (which resulted in their shifting to the suburbs).

Officials estimate 15 percent of the city's welfare population — about 10,000 — is able to hold a job. The rest might be mentally ill, disabled, alcoholic or addicted to drugs, and their behaviour can seem menacing even to sympathetic residents.

"I try to give them food rather than money when I come out of the supermarket," said Laurel Suess, a resident in an upper middle class neighbourhood in the western part of the city. "But there's a quality of life issue too."

Mayor Brown has adopted a two-pronged approach: building low-income housing and improving the economy to provide jobs. He said he will put a $100 million bond issue on the November ballot to raise money for low-income units.

Andy Olshin, the mayor's co-ordinator on homelessness, is spearheading a pilot workfare programme to pay people to clean parks for four days a week and receive job training on the fifth day.

Released from jail on parole, Robert Kahn said he intended to go right back to feeding people in public. "How do you solve homelessness? I don't know," he said. "But people should not be penalised if they have no place to sleep."

Brown agreed, and said the poor will be left alone unless they break the law. "If people violate the law — I don't care who they are — the law must be enforced," he said. "Feeding people is not like urinating or defecating in the streets. That's the conduct that causes people to be arrested. I'll not ignore that."

Mean streets . . . Many U.S. cities have adopted hardline attitudes towards society's most visible poor

Trading on a Nation's Weakness

OPINION
Richard Estrada

THEY CALL them "thump-thumps." In places like Gallup, New Mexico, the term refers to the sound one hears as the front and rear axles of a car run over a drunken Indian who has passed out in the road. In winter, indigenous inebriates who die after falling asleep on the snow and ice are sometimes called "popsicles."

Appalling images? Appalling terms? Certainly. But as America once again lapses into the age-old practice of Indian bashing, it needs to remind itself that stark imagery often transcends the useful stigmatization of alcoholism and instead promotes the dehumanization of Indians. The surprise is that corporate marketing is blazing new trails to insensitivity.

Take Budweiser, for example. In the United States, the largest beer manufacturer on the planet is running commercials featuring alligators and frogs. But in the United Kingdom, Budweiser is running commercials on TV and in movie theaters showing happy Indians drinking in a bar. Four centuries after the arrival of the Europeans in America, isn't it about time for society to afford Indians basic respect? A little human decency?

Ever since the days when European traders learned of the Indians' weakness for firewater, outsiders have been trying to make money from this unfortunate fact. Today, American Indians are plagued by a rate of alcoholism five times greater than the general population. Alcoholism among the Indians is one of the country's most persistent social problems.

But has that kept U.S. beer manufacturers in recent years from crossing the line again by actually targeting Indian consumers? Not unless you think the brand name Crazy Horse malt liquor was chosen by accident.

To be sure, Budweiser is undertaking a different strategy in the United Kingdom. It is defending its ad campaign there on the grounds that the commercials are targeting consumers who admire Indians instead of targeting the Indians themselves. But such an explanation misses the point.

Beer drinkers everywhere may deeply admire the American Indian as an ideal, but such admiration does not absolve anyone from considering the group in a social or moral vacuum. Specifically, the clods-in-sales cannot be excused for having ignored the Indians' disproportionate addiction to alcohol, even if their Indian ads have been largely responsible for a 20 percent increase in sales in England over the last year. But the emphasis on the bottom line is also subjecting Budweiser to criticism now that it is running commercials in the United States that appear to mimic Leni Riefenstahl's cinematic glorification of the Berlin Olympics of 1936.

Some critics will naturally want to focus mainly or exclusively on racism and the corporate culture. Indeed, Budweiser's role as an official sponsor of the 1996 Centennial Olympics will give everyone an opportunity to ponder this facet of the debate. But the subject of how the image of American Indians is being manipulated is also germane to the issue of American nationhood.

People may still talk of "Indian Nations" but, in actuality, it is time to emphasize that Indians are also Americans. They are U.S. citizens.

After I wrote a column last year opposing the practice of U.S. athletic teams being named after Indians, some readers asked me if it was really worth my time and effort to focus on the topic. I had argued against the practice because such names tend to set people apart and use them as mascots. My point was that in the most ethnically diverse nation on earth, it is imperative to promote fairness, decency and respect among all our ethnic communities.

Indeed, setting people apart helps no one. Under no circumstances should anyone's heritage be underscored for laughs or money. When Indians are dehumanized, they are turned into objects. As objects, they supposedly merit no particular respect or sensitivity. And anyone who professes to ignore where this might lead might consider the logical extremity of such thinking: "The only good Indian is a dead Indian."

Japanese Are Dying For a Transplant

Mary Jordan in Tokyo

HIROFUMI KIUCHI'S heart was failing him, and so was his country. With his life slipping away at age 23, his only hope was a heart transplant, an operation essentially banned in Japan.

So Kiuchi, frail and near death, boarded a plane bound for Los Angeles. For almost 10 hours he sat strapped in a cramped airline seat tethered to oxygen, an electrocardiograph and intravenous medicine, tended by three doctors.

Four days later, on July 26, 1993, the heart of a young American traffic-accident victim was sewn into Kiuchi at UCLA Medical Center.

Within a week, Kiuchi walked out into the California sunshine, grateful for his life and bitter at the nation that would have denied it to him.

"I feel that I was supposed to be killed by Japan, by the Japanese government, Japanese tradition, Japanese culture," Kiuchi said. "If I stayed there, I would have died. I know this." The only heart transplant in Japan occurred in 1968, and the surgeon who performed the operation was charged with murdering the brain-dead donor.

Citing tradition, culture and religious concerns, Japan has rejected medical advances that have given thousands of critically ill people around the world a second chance at life. In Japan, the age-old definition of death — a stopped heart — is still used, effectively making heart, liver and most lung transplants impossible.

The de facto ban on these transplants exposes a broader dilemma facing Japan — how to balance modern technology with traditional beliefs. As transplant advocates urge Japan to embrace medical advances, traditionalists argue that thousands of years of culture are more powerful than surgeons and that people must accept the life, and the death, that God and nature intended for them.

Takeshi Umehara, a respected scholar of Japanese culture, said Japanese believe that "it is not only the brain that makes us human." So for them, even a brain-dead person is alive until the last beat of his heart. A bill recognizing brain death as the legal end of life was introduced in the Japanese parliament two years ago. But the issue is so sensitive that lawmakers have refused to debate it.

Akihiko Noro, a member of the lower house of parliament who supports the bill, argues that Japan has changed and that a majority of the people are willing to accept the concept of brain death. "Doctors want it, patients need it, and hundreds of people are going overseas to get" transplants, Noro said.

Not all transplants are banned in Japan. Cornea, kidney and bone marrow transplants are allowed because they do not require a brain-dead donor. But there are few donors because of the Japanese belief that bodies must remain intact for the trip to the afterlife.

For the average Japanese, the concept of donating or receiving organs is extremely vexing, said Soho Machida, who was a Buddhist monk for 20 years and now teaches at Princeton University.

Machida, who is visiting Tokyo, said many Japanese believe a person's body and soul are linked and giving up an organ is like giving up part of one's soul. As a result, there are fewer than 200 kidney transplant operations in Japan each year, even though 20,000 people need them. By comparison, 11,000 kidney transplants were performed in the United States last year.

Still, a growing number of Japanese are carrying organ-donor cards. One of them is Kiuchi, whose card grants permission for his kidneys, eyes, heart, liver, skin and bone marrow to be taken for transplant. "I believe my soul can live happily in the next world even if there is a scar on my body," he said.

Transplant advocates say the situation in Japan, the world's second-richest nation, has become a national embarrassment. Recent polls show that 91 percent of Japanese physicians want the government to approve transplants.

Doctors here estimate that hundreds of sick Japanese have gone abroad in recent years to prolong their lives and that thousands more have stayed home and died, often because they were too ill or too poor to travel.

Kiuchi was able to raise the $380,000 he needed for the air fare to Los Angeles and the cost of his treatment only with loans and a fund-raising campaign that drew donations from more than 10,000 Japanese, many of whom had heart ailments.

Some desperately ill Japanese have resorted to buying organs abroad — a practice that is legal in Japan but that the World Health Organization condemns. On the streets around the Tokyo Women's Medical College, where many patients undergo kidney dialysis, posters pop up overnight informing passersby of telephone numbers to call if they need a kidney. Those numbers lead to brokers who arrange organ purchases in other Asian countries.

Tsuyoshi Awaya, a medical and legal sociologist at Tokuyama University, has researched organ selling in India and the Philippines, the most popular organ markets for Japanese patients, as well as in Vietnam, Cambodia, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh. Awaya has interviewed and photographed 100 donors who swapped a kidney, bone marrow, even a cornea, for quick cash.

Although legalizing all transplants and expanding the donor pool in Japan would not stop the global trade in human organs, it would reduce demand, Awaya said. But politicians are unwilling to upset tradition. As the country refuses to engage in a national discussion of technology versus tradition, people are dying for want of a transplant — something Yoshio Aranami would like people to remember.

Ten years ago, Aranami watched his 15-year-old daughter die of liver failure. As her congenital disease made her weaker and weaker, Aranami begged doctors to perform a transplant to save her life. He still lives with "an ache in his heart" that he did not take her abroad.

Aranami consoled himself with the thought that her death might help the transplant cause in Japan. Today, his hope remains unfulfilled: "It is impossible to imagine that all this time has passed and there has been no progress."

GUARDIAN WEEKLY
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Between the Lines

Ellen Goodman offers an alternative selection of great holiday books

IT'S SUMMER. You promised to become computer literate, but suddenly you remember that even Bill Gates chose to write a book. You've struggled with virtual reality, but now you figure you'd rather relax with a novel. You've surfed the Internet, but you find yourself longing to read in a hammock.

Meanwhile, the best-seller list sounds more like the McLaughlin Group than the literary round table. The authors yell: "Rush Limbaugh is a Big Fat Idiot!" or "We're Right, They're Wrong!" And you can't believe that there are still two — count 'em, two — O.J. Simpson books in the top 10.

Not to worry. As a public service, I once again offer an alternative and quirky list of books which have nothing in common except that I read and enjoyed them.

To begin with, Snow Falling On Cedars is as good a vehicle as any to help you out of the everyday speed zone. David Guterson sinks slowly into island life in midcentury Puget Sound.

The backdrop of this story is a murder trial, but it evokes the deeper mysteries of a tightly knit and lethally divided community

You can't believe that there are still two — count 'em, two — O.J. Simpson books in the top 10 bestsellers

where "no one trod too easily on the emotions of another" until forced to.

There is a very different and deserted island setting for Amelia Earhart's posthumous life story. I Was Amelia Earhart opens in 1937 after the aviatrix's mysterious disappearance. But Jane Mendelsohn's reverie on the "loneliest of heroines" touches women of our own time who push at the edges of fame and expectations and only discover real life after they crash.

In some ways, Vienna Daniels, the heroine of Katherine Mosby's novel was also a deserted woman. Private Altars is the tale of an educated urban bride who arrived in a small West Virginia town in the late 1920s. This designated eccentric, a recluse with two children, is the central figure of a truly Gothic Southern story.

To complete this trilogy of women is the elderly Italian narrator in Susanna Tamaro's extended letter to an estranged granddaughter. Follow Your Heart trips sometimes over the threshold between sentiment and sentimentality. But the grandmother bequeaths a wisdom as earthy and well-tested as the family's cake pan.

Having wallowed happily in The Stone Diaries last year, I've begun working my way back through Carol Shields's earlier novels with delight. The Republic Of Love is a thoroughly modern and, therefore, skeptical love story of a thrice-married 40-year-old DJ and a never-married folklorist.

This is "just a love story" the way The Stone Diaries was "just a life story." "Love," Shields writes, "belongs in an amateur operetta, on the inside of a jokey greeting card, or in the annals of an old-fashioned poetry society . . . It's the one thing in the world everyone wants, but for some reason people are obliged to pretend love is trifling and foolish . . ."

Love makes only the most cameo appearances on the nonfiction list this year, overwhelmed by scandal and celebrity, screeds and telltales. But there is good news as well.

There has been a renaissance of political books from the dormant left-of-center. One is E.J. Dionne's book on progressive politics, a treatise more thoughtful and certainly hopeful than its title: They Only Look Dead.

As for the resurrected, one of the very best analyses of American society, Habits Of The Heart, has been reissued with an insightful new introduction by the same five authors.

Jim Fallows, meanwhile, beats up on the media in ways that the less permissive (and less sensitive) of us regard as healthy. In Breaking The News, Fallows is best when describing the "competitive glibness . . . polarization and overstatement" of talk-show journalists, and when criticizing those who analyze the politics of an issue rather than the issue.

For proof of this rebuke, there is Jonathan Kozol's sober look at the overlooked: children who live in the worst poverty pockets of urban America. In one moment of Amazing Grace a mother with AIDS is told about compassion fatigue among the well-to-do and she says, "I don't understand what they have done to get so tired."

If Kozol is a lonely voice, there's an explosion of books lamenting family. One of the best is Mary Pipher's The Shelter Of Each Other. She writes of children growing up in the "consumption oriented, electronic community that is teaching them very different values from those we say we value." She is a wise companion in family unfriendly times.

But it's fathers who have really been filling the family bookshelves. This year there are treatises on absent fathers and memoirs of remembered fathers.

Of these, Mary Gordon's book on herself/her father is an astonishingly brave meditation on The Shadow Man, who was the false foundation of her own life. "My father died when I was seven years old," she writes. "I always thought that was the most important thing anyone could know about me." Painfully, piece by piece, she exhumes a man with a different name, language, nationality, resumé. In the process, she is as unsparingly honest about herself as about her father.

Finally, if none of these books appeals to you, you can always cuddle up with the winners of the Bulwer-Lytton Fiction Contest, the award that annually honors contestants who achieve the ultimate in bad writing.

This year they gave the grand prize to Janice Estey of Aspen, Colorado, for the following paragraph: "'Ace, watch you head!' hissed Wanda urgently, yet somehow provocatively, through red, full, sensuous lips, but he couldn't, you know, since nobody can actually watch more than part of his nose or a little cheek or lips if he really tries, but he appreciated her warning."

Way to go Janice. Next year the best-seller list!



In the Best of Families

Gustavo Perez Firmat

A HEART SO WHITE
By Javier Marias
Translated from the Spanish
By Margaret Jull Costa
Harvill/HarperCollins. 279pp. $24

THIS NOVEL could have been many things — a love story, a murder mystery, a tale about the loss of innocence and the burden of guilt, a study of the complicated, sometimes sinister negotiations between fathers and sons or husbands and wives. Instead, however, Javier Marias — one of the best-known and most interesting novelists to have emerged in Spain during the last 15 years — takes bits and pieces of what could have been and puts them together into a book that is as quirky as it is brilliant.

Narrated by a talkative thirty-something who makes a living as an interpreter for the United Nations the story ambles leisurely across two continents and three generations, eventually settling on a decades-old family secret concerning the narrator's father. Imagine The House Of The Seven Gables as told to Laurence Sterne, and you begin to form some idea of the dark truths and bright ideas that make up the novel.

The intriguing cast of characters includes the narrator's father, Ranz, an aging, caped Lothario who has survived three wives; Luisa, the narrator's wife, who develops a strange intimacy with her father-in-law; Berta, a former lover who spends her spare time looking for a mate through the personal ads; Custardoy, a childhood buddy who has grown into an expert forger of 18th-century French art and who may also be having an affair with his best friend's wife; and Miriam, a Cuban mulatta whose life briefly intersects with the narrator's during his honeymoon in Havana.

An endless stream of cute or acute reflections trickle from the restless mind of the narrator, who ventures opinions on everything from the finer points of translating Shakespeare (the novel's title comes from Macbeth, which gives you a clue as to what the family's secret is all about) to the stress-filled jobs of the guards at the Prado (imagine staring at Velazquez's Las Meninas every day for 40 years). In the process, he gives us some wonderful scenes, such as the mangled interview between a Thatcher-like British prime minister and a high-ranking Spanish politician, during which the interpreter substitutes his own questions for those of the participants, so that when the Spaniard asks his British counterpart whether she wants tea, the interpreter recasts the question as "Tell me, do the people in your country love you?" What follows is a minuet of missed connections that is both hilarious and affecting.

Anytime the narrator looks, he sees something; anytime he listens, he catches an intriguing snippet of conversation. To a large extent, he is less a character than a mode of perception, a point of view. True to his calling as translator, he seems far less attentive to the origin or impact of experience than to the mere act of recording and conveying it.

The underlying problem, though, is that nobody can be perceptive all the time, and even unmitigated perceptiveness becomes a little grating unless it is filtered through an engaging personality, which Marias's protagonist doesn't have. As a result, there are moments in the novel when the reader wishes that the narrator stopped looking and simply joined in the fray or at least got out of the way long enough to let the other characters go about their dirty business.

But this is only a quibble. Ably rendered in English by Margaret Jull Costa — a translator's translator, if there ever was one — A Heart So White is an entertaining and intelligent novel that illustrates one of the ways in which younger Spanish novelists have advanced beyond the drab, count-your-*tapas* realism of much contemporary Spanish fiction.

Falling Into a World of Color

Robert Wilson

THE WRECKED, BLESSED BODY OF SHELTON LAFLEUR
By John Gregory Brown
Houghton Mifflin. 257pp. $21.95

THE WRECKED, Blessed Body Of Shelton LaFleur, John Gregory Brown's lyrical and thoughtful second novel, revisits questions of race in New Orleans, the subject and setting of Decorations In A Ruined Cemetery, his award-winning first. Although the new book's strength — what makes Brown stand out among young literary novelists — is the power and rhythm of his prose, he has an enthusiasm for plot that is rarer than it should be among serious novelists of any age. This new novel is as tangily complicated as its title.

In it, Shelton LaFleur, an old man who has achieved distinction as a painter, tells the story of his life. Three things in that life have defined it: his race, his art and the accident that wrecked his body — a fall at the age of 8 from a large oak tree in New Orleans's Audubon Park. That fall, which left Shelton barely able to walk, landed him "not just in the dirt and oak leaves and roots and not just beyond the hearing of family ears and the sight of family eyes but in a place beyond everything he'd ever seen or heard or known."

The family consisted only of Edward Soniat, a wealthy white man, and his unmarried, childless daughter, Margaret. Although the year was 1926 (and not, say, 1826), Shelton, who is black, was purchased as a gift for his sickly daughter, herself only 17 and crippled with a disease that would kill her before the age of 30.

Despite the shameful way in which the Soniats got him, with its shades of slavery, Shelton was raised and lavished with love as Margaret's own child — the physical impossibility of which, because he is as black as she is white, Shelton does not realize even at the time of his fall from the tree. He learns of it only from the policemen who pick up his crushed body.

After the fall he can only tell the policeman that his mother is white, which they rightly doubt, as do the nuns at the Catholic hospital where he is taken. Once he has healed as much as he will, he is moved to a home for black orphans, where he will remain for five years.

Here the plot calls for considerable suspension of disbelief. Many, many pages later Brown offers an explanation for the Soniats' curious inability to find Shelton. Although the explanation is not illogical, it is still far from convincing. But the point, in any case, is that Shelton has fallen out of the white world and into the black.

During his time in the orphanage, Shelton retains his sweet, good-hearted nature, in spite of his apparent abandonment by the Soniats, whose house he still pines for as home. And in spite of the treatment he suffers from the other orphan boys, who mock his belief in his white family and whose cruelty is inflamed by his weakness and his injuries.

One day Shelton just walks away from the orphanage. He tries to run but can't. In another plot wrinkle that Brown can't quite iron smooth, on the morning he walks away the son-in-law of the Soniats' nursemaid happens to be watching for him outside the orphanage. This man, Minou Parrain, has gone looking for Shelton because Margaret has recently died and the nursemaid is herself near death. Only Dickens can really get away with this sort of thing, but because of his lyric intensity, Brown almost succeeds.

Minou takes Shelton home to his shotgun house and although Shelton still aches for the Soniat house, he begins life with what is, and will be revealed to be, his real family. The slow discovery of Shelton's identity provides the twists and mounting tension of, for example, Great Expectations. Shelton goes from crippled boy to famous painter, and he learns to turn the moments in his life of despair or joy, of rejection or revelation, into paintings.

Shelton comes across as a palpable but psychologically complex character. The novel doesn't propose any neat conclusions about race. Most of the drama of Shelton's life has its origin in his blackness, and yet he seems to have lived in his skin more comfortably than most, no matter their color.

GUARDIAN WEEKLY
August 4 1996

ETA escalates bombing campaign in Spain

Basque separatism once again tops Madrid's political agenda, writes **Michel Bôle-Richard**

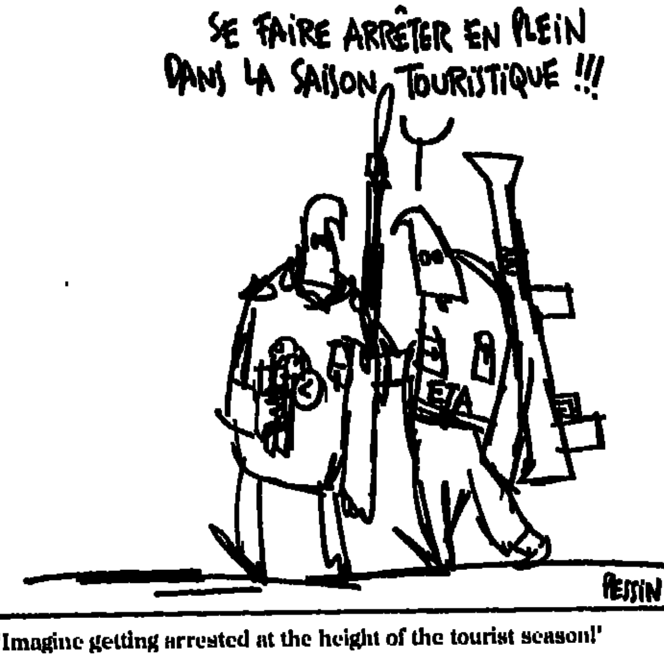
THE Basque separatist organisation, ETA, has stepped up its terrorist campaign in Spain, in accordance with its now familiar summer policy of targeting tourist resorts in an attempt to discourage foreign visitors. Thirteen bombs were recently let off within the space of 11 days, including the July 20 blast at Reus Airport near Tarragona which injured 35, among them a score of British tourists.

ETA's new offensive follows a week-long ceasefire it observed at the end of June. The group had called on the new Spanish government to give "a clear and public answer as to its intentions with a view to solving the conflict in the Basque Country", to agree to its "right to self-determination", and to accept the result of a "democratic debate" among Basques on the issue.

An answer of a kind came from a meeting on June 25 of democratic Basque parties belonging to the anti-terrorist pact. They offered to start talks with ETA on condition it released the prison warder, José Antonio Ortega Lara, whom it kidnapped on January 17, ended its violence, and recognised the political plurality of the Basque people.

The Basque parties had not shown such unity for some time but, despite the united front, ETA turned down their offer, even though Basque public opinion and organisations sympathetic to the separatists supported an extension of the ceasefire.

The government also made a gesture by regrouping in the Basque Country 32 of the 500 ETA members being held in jails all over Spain, and by promising to consider doing the same for other detainees.



'Imagine getting arrested at the height of the tourist season!'

A week later the bombs started exploding again. When the interior minister, Jaime Mayor Oreja, visited those injured in the Tarragona blast, he stressed that the government would not be deflected from its anti-terrorist and prison policy.

Before the airport was bombed the prime minister, José Maria Aznar, had announced that new measures to fight terrorism would be decided on within a week. Following the end of the ceasefire, which had been widely seen as a gesture by ETA towards the new government (though the latter dismissed it as a "trap"), Aznar seemed to be moving towards a hardening of the government's position.

After coming to power his conservative People's party had relaxed its intransigent stance on the Basque issue. Before the election, Aznar was particularly hostile to a policy of rehabilitation and called for all sentences to be served in full. He attacked the Socialist government's anti-terrorist policy and accused it of "capitulating" to ETA.

In government he initially adopted a more liberal stance and stopped criticising Xavier Arzallus's Basque Nationalist party for calling for secret talks with ETA.

Recently, however, the deputy prime minister, Francisco Alvarez Cascos, returned to the government's previous position when he rejected the idea of any secret talks with ETA until it had officially decided to lay down its weapons.

The previous government had been saying much the same thing, but it emerged that Felipe González's public statements did not always square with the facts; his government had built up lines of communication with the separatist organisation, notably through the Argentine winner of the Nobel Peace Prize, Adolfo Pérez Esquivel.

On July 19, a high court decided to bring proceedings against the 25 members of the executive of Herri Batasuna (HB), ETA's political wing, on the grounds that they had collaborated with an armed group. They had distributed, before the March 3 election, a video in which ETA set forth its demands.

The action against the HB leadership may cause further tensions in the Basque Country, as the judiciary has traditionally turned a blind eye to the relationship between the two organisations.

On this occasion the magistrate in charge of the case, Baltasar Garzon, felt HB had overstepped the mark in condoning the murders in February of the lawyer Fernando Mugica and a former constitutional court president, Francisco Tomas y Valiente — murders that caused widespread indignation in Spain.

Paris and Madrid are now co-operating in the fight against ETA. This was confirmed on July 24 when French police, apparently acting on a tip-off from the Spanish authorities, arrested seven separatist activists at a remote farmhouse in the French Pyrenees. Their haul included Julian Atxura Egurola, known as "Pototo", who is thought to be ETA's third in command.

The first serious test of Franco-Spanish relations on the Basque issue came on May 4, the day Aznar took office, when France handed over José Antonio Urrutikoetax, known as Josu Ternera, who was regarded as an important member of the ETA leadership.

There are rumours in the Basque Country that the closeness of current Franco-Spanish co-operation may extend beyond police level, and that Paris could play a part in paving the way for talks with ETA — though that is unlikely for the time being and has been officially denied by the Aznar government.

(July 23 and 25)

New PM promises to modernise Greece

Daniel Vernet in Athens

AFTER his victory at last month's congress of the ruling Pan-Hellenic Socialist Movement (Pasok) — and now that he no longer has his predecessor, the late Andreas Papandreou, looking over his shoulder — Greece's prime minister, Costas Simitis, is determined to act quickly on his promise to modernise the country and its political life.

An indication of the government's new strategy came last week with the lifting of Greece's veto on European Union aid to southern and eastern Mediterranean countries. The veto had been prompted by a dispute earlier this year between Greece and Turkey over the sovereignty of a tiny island in the Aegean.

With a general election due in the autumn of 1997, Simitis will make a policy speech in September in which he will spell out his priorities and announce a limited number of modest but specific projects that can be implemented before the country goes to the polls.

The government has outlined priorities in different areas. On the economy, the aim is to conform to the Maastricht convergence criteria. To do that the government will have to fight inflation, which now stands at 8 per cent, reduce the budget deficit, bring down effective interest rates, which are the highest in Europe and discourage investment, and ensure that grants promised by the so-called "Delors II package" are used in the most efficient way.

Also on the agenda are a modernisation of Greece's institutions, a reform of its bloated civil service, and a redefinition of the objectives of state-owned companies, some of which will be privatised. Action will be taken in the areas of defence and social benefits, which the government hopes to improve despite spending restrictions.

A source close to the prime minister says: "We're caught in a vicious triangle. The Maastricht criteria, our welfare state and our defence spending, which is the highest in Europe in relative terms, are incompatible."

One of the aims of another government priority, to develop a new approach to foreign policy issues, is to reduce long-term defence spending.

But that is not the only reason why Simitis has decided to abandon his predecessor's populist stance on Greece's EU allies, Nato and major international issues. Greece wants to be able to act as a driving force in the Balkans by "exporting stability" rather than fomenting trouble, and by drawing on its own experience to help the Balkan countries move closer to western Europe.

There remains the problem of Turkey. As was shown at the beginning of the year in the clash between Athens and Ankara, Greek foreign policy has been dominated and distorted by tensions with its neighbour.

The Greek government naturally felt some concern when a pro-Islamic prime minister came to power in Turkey last month. But it also took a malicious pleasure in pointing out to its EU partners that they had been wrong to place their trust in Turkey and interpret Tansu Ciller's Chanel suits as proof of Ankara's pro-western stance.

Prime ministerial sources see the issue in slightly more sophisticated terms. They are less worried about the coming to power of the Islamists than about the flimsiness of the coalition between Ciller and Necmettin Erbakan, leader of the pro-Islamic Welfare party, and the risk that Turkish foreign policy may become inflamed by nationalist feelings.

They argue that because Welfare is not a monolithic party the most intelligent policy would be to encourage its more pragmatic wing, to which Erbakan is thought to belong, so that it no longer needs either the support of the fundamentalists or a coalition with Ciller in order to govern.

According to that argument, the only way to help Turkey and discourage it from turning its back on Europe is to give it money. In other words, Greece would not be hostile to the EU providing Turkey with financial aid, provided specific strings were attached.

Simitis has less than a year to push this new policy through. After being approved first by parliament, then by Pasok, he now needs only the verdict of the ballot box to usher in what is widely seen as a new era in Greek history. It is an era that will finally bring down the curtain on the period that followed the military dictatorship of 1967-74, and which, for better or for worse, was embodied by Papandreou.

(July 23)

Atlanta loses the spirit of Lillehammer

COMMENT
Alain Giraudo

IT WAS as freezing in Lillehammer during the 1994 Winter Olympics as it has been sweltering in Atlanta since the beginning of the centennial Games. The Norwegians were just as proud and happy to host a global sporting event as the American South is today. They displayed their patriotism by waving thousands of little Norwegian flags, just as countless Americans have been waving the Stars and Stripes. But the similarity between Lillehammer and Atlanta ends with the events themselves.

The Norwegians' love of sport knew no frontiers: they enthusiastically applauded winners and losers alike, whatever their country of origin. People from all over the world had come to Lillehammer, and Lillehammer welcomed them with open arms.

Is there, one wonders, a climatic factor that affects the degree of generosity a host nation displays towards its guests? It is tempting to think so: what we have witnessed in Atlanta, in temperatures 30 C higher than in Lillehammer, is worlds away from the sheer jubilation of that wintry event.

There would be little point in an opinion pollster asking spectators filing into Atlanta's Olympic park what they thought of, say, France's gold-medallists — who include judokas David Douillet and Djamel Bouras, cyclist Jeannie Longo and fencer Laura Flesset — because the number of people who had heard of them would be statistically insignificant.

It could not be otherwise. Americans are interested only in America. The Olympic Games are merely an opportunity for Americans to wallow in self-congratulation. They chant "USA" like a fanatical mantra if an American is competing.

It all began with the July 19 opening ceremony. After each national delegation had marched past in an atmosphere of barely polite indifference, American spectators went crazy when their own delegation, the last, entered the stadium. Only one anthem was sung, the Star-Spangled Banner, whereas protocol normally requires the Greek and Olympic anthems to be played.

That set the tone. Ever since then, the crowds have shown only two kinds of reaction: indifference or hysteria. NBC, the official television channel covering the Olympic Games, which decides which pictures it sends out, naturally prefers hysteria to indifference. So it has concentrated on American champions.

We had already come to the conclusion that Atlanta was less than 100 per cent efficient on the organisational side. What we had not expected was such a crude display of selfishness.

(July 25)

Bnei Brak stakes its claim to the future

Israel has to listen to its ultra-orthodox Jews now that they have a lever on power. **Gilles Paris** reports from Tel Aviv



IT IS the sabbath. Two roller-skaters speed from the sea front through the graceless streets of Bnei Brak, Tel Aviv's ultra-orthodox suburb. Not a car is to be seen, and the streets have been taken over by children at play dressed in black shorts, white shirts and *kippas*. There is a flurry of excitement as the two men, wearing baggy trousers, Chicago Bulls T-shirts and caps worn back to front, career past the kids, who then go back to their quiet games. A pall of silence descends once again over the so-called black town.

When, in the early hours of May 30, Shimon Peres admitted he had lost the general election, people sang and danced in the streets of Bnei Brak as they celebrated the defeat of the candidate who in their view did not deserve to be trusted by the wise men of the Torah.

Two days before the poll, vans bristling with loudspeakers crawled through the streets of the suburb telling the population how the rabbis of the two most popular parties in the area — the ultra-orthodox Sephardic party, Shas, and its Ashkenazic rival, United Torah Judaism — wanted them to vote.

Both parties plumped for Binyamin Netanyahu, even though he was an adulterer and divorcee, and despite his only "electorally religious" promise being that he would "gradually" go over to kosher food.

Shas emerged the big winner in the suburb of Bnei Brak, while in Tel Aviv itself, the "godless" and "indecent" city lambasted by the ultra-orthodox, people wept as they learnt the result.

With 23 seats in parliament (10 going to Shas, nine to the Zionist National Religious Party, and four to United Torah Judaism), the religious bloc is now the third-largest political force in Israel, after Labour (34) and the nationalist Likud (32), which teamed up with David Levy's Gesher and the extremist Rafael Eytan's Tsomet for the elections.

The ultra-orthodox, or *haredim* (literally "tremblers" before God), form the great majority of voters in Bnei Brak. After Netanyahu's victory they quickly drew up a list of demands, which were chiefly of a financial nature: they wanted money for the hospital, money to build new housing and money for the local authority.

Finance would not seem to be the strong point of the ultra-orthodox. In June 1995, the interior minister became alarmed at the chaotic state of Bnei Brak's administration. Its mayor, Moshe Irenstein, was widely suspected of irregularities, corruption and nepotism.

A ministry audit revealed that the authority's deficit was increasing at an alarming pace because almost half the population did not pay local taxes. Council workers who were no longer getting their pay cheques decided to go on strike, bringing Bnei Brak to a standstill. A no-nonsense administrator was appointed to replace Irenstein.

José Bellalou, a French architect who settled in Israel in 1984, thinks Bnei Brak's demands for more money are justified: "It's always been like that with the Jews: there have always been those who work and those who pray. Other towns get money to build sports stadiums, swimming pools and parks, so why can't we get some too, since we pray for Israel?"

Bellalou is critical of the methods used by the administrator, "who knows nothing about the problems of religious Jews", and who cut off some houses' water supply in an attempt to get their occupants to pay their bills.

Bellalou decided to live in Bnei Brak so he could be sure his children would receive a proper religious education. He earns enough to enable his two brothers to devote all their time to the study of sacred texts, as do most residents of Bnei Brak.

"People like that have a moral stamina I don't possess," says Bellalou. "And you need plenty of it to make ends meet with a pathetically small income." They get about $500 a month, 80 per cent of which comes in the form of donations.

"There are whole families that have to make do with one chicken a week, on the sabbath. It's a huge sacrifice. So why can't the government give us more help, when it helps researchers, scientists and even parasites like drug addicts and the unemployed?"

Bellalou says that four out of five local people spend all their time studying sacred texts. At all times of day or night, there is a crowd of ultra-orthodox milling about in front of the "prayer self-service" in Bnei Brak's biggest shopping street. An 11pm visit to Poniovitch, the biggest local yeshiva, reveals armies of young students in white shirts still hard at work in a huge neon-lit classroom.

Although it has now come to symbolise ultra-orthodoxy, like the Mea Sharim district in Jerusalem and Kyriat Sfer, another fast-growing "black town" 30km out of Tel Aviv, Bnei Brak has not always had an exclusively religious colouring. After the creation of modern Israel, it was settled by "modern" religious Jews and secularists as well as the ultra-orthodox. But all that changed in the seventies when the "modern" believers moved to Labour-backed settlements in the West Bank, and the more affluent secularists took up residence in Tel Aviv's posh suburbs.

TODAY only 20,000 of Bnei Brak's 140,000 inhabitants are not ultra-orthodox. They are concentrated in the old district of Pardes Katz, which has become the secularists' last stronghold.

Bellalou says that people like him get on well with the secularists. But the well-known television actor, Uri Gavriel, disagrees. When he wanted to open a drama school aimed at helping delinquents earlier this year he got into considerable trouble with fellow Bnei Brak residents and the local authority.

The secularists in Pardes Katz believe that the ultra-orthodox want to take over the area because it includes an industrial zone, which would bring in tax revenues. Space is a rare commodity in Bnei Brak, where the birth rate has gone through the roof.

According to Yossi Shilhan, a professor at nearby Bar Ilan University, the secularists of Pardes Katz are discriminated against as a result of the highly sophisticated "spoils system" operated by the local authority, whereby the many branches of ultra-orthodoxy — the Hassidim, the "Lithuanians", the "Orientals" — that hold power within the authority look after the interests of their own spiritual families alone, to the detriment of minorities.

Ultra-orthodox extremists are also active. A year ago they targeted a newsstand whose owner, David Green, sold non-religious papers described by the men in black as "scandal sheets". After threatening and roughing up the elderly Green, who had survived the Holocaust, they blew up his newsstand.

In Jerusalem, the ultra-orthodox took their cue from the Bnei Brak brigade by introducing buses where men are separated from women on lines serving *haredim* areas. After the election they insisted that on the sabbath their local McDonalds should not be allowed to open and cars should be banned from Bar Ilan Street, northern Jerusalem's main thoroughfare.

Other things they wish to see banned include the import of non-kosher meat, the sale of pork, religious conversions that have been recognised only by the Reform minority, abortion for "socio-economic" reasons, archaeological digs in ancient cemeteries, "profanations" caused by the construction of roads and buildings, and "indecent" advertising.

Bellalou is optimistic: "In the old days, nobody bothered about the orthodox except when an election came up, whereas now they'll have to bother about us for four years. And next time, with more and more children being born in our community, we'll get a majority in the Knesset."

Before the May election, Israeli society already had deep misgivings about the peace process with the Palestinians. Now it will also have to reckon with the "men in black" and the model they hope to impose on it — the moral order of Bnei Brak.

(July 23)

Investors 'should shun unstable Burma'

Aung San Suu Kyi tells **Frédéric Bobin** why foreign investment helps only her country's élite

THE July 20 meeting of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations in Jakarta is expected to grant Burma "observer status". Asean official policy is one of constructive engagement with Rangoon. Do you approve of that policy?

That kind of constructive engagement will only strengthen the regime in power without improving the situation in any way.

Do you think regional capitals are sympathetic to your stance?

Countries in the region understand that there's a serious danger of instability in Burma. The past few months have shown that the situation here is highly volatile. The regime has been acting very nervily towards us — which suggests it recognises we're a political force to be reckoned with. People are fed up with the army's behaviour and have been showing increasing commitment to our movement.

Are you also hostile to foreign investment in Burma?

Investors shouldn't come here, because all the money goes to an élite. I would like to mention the case of the French firm, Total [currently involved in plans for a gas pipeline in southern Burma due to come into operation in mid-1998]. Total has become the Burmese military's strongest source of support. It's not the right time to invest here.

But don't you think investment can have positive spinoffs for the population at large?

Hardly. The best business opportunities always go to the same élite. There's a class of people here who are getting very rich, so much so that they don't know what to do with their money. We had never experienced anything like that before in Burma.

Meanwhile there are people who are so poor — particularly in rural areas — that they are forced to take their children out of school.

Do you then regard the opening up of the Burmese economy as a failure?

From 1991 to 1994, the experiment seemed to be relatively successful. But that was because the economy had up to then been completely cut off. In the past year the regime has been unable to consolidate those gains. Inflation has run out of control — proof there's a lack of confidence in the regime.

Couldn't the opening-up process eventually lead to democratic rule being introduced?

I don't think so. Look at what happened in the Philippines in the seventies. The opening up of the economy only benefited Marcos and his circle. But as the situation didn't improve, it all ended with a people's revolution.

What's the best way to get out of the present deadlock?

All we want is the beginning of a dialogue. We're not imposing any preconditions. All we demand is that the dialogue should have a genuine political substance and be conducted on an equal footing.

At the end of last year we refused to approve the proceedings of the national convention charged with drawing up a new charter, precisely because free debate within it was not allowed. We cannot accept a constitution which has been drawn up solely by the army.

The government is thinking of organising elections once the constitution has been adopted. Will you take part in them?

It's premature to talk about elections when the problem of the previous elections has not yet been solved [Suu Kyi's National League for Democracy won more than 80 per cent of the vote in 1990, but the the junta simply ignored the result].

Since the 1988 crackdown, the junta has moved closer to China. What's your reaction to that?

It's Burma's duty to have good relations with neighbours like China and India. But I'm worried about how the people might react if Beijing supports the regime too vigorously. It might cause racial tension between Burmese and the Chinese community that lives here. When people are discontented they tend to feel the Chinese are over-privileged.

(July 20)

Le Monde

Directeur: Jean-Marie Colombani

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The Guardian Weekly

Eye for detail . . . A satellite image shows the damage caused by the earthquake last year in Kobe, Japan, including a toppled flyover PHOTO: SPACE IMAGING AND MITSUBISHI CORP

Now you can watch Big Brother

Privately financed spy probes are raising issues of national security and governments are getting nervous, write **Edward Helmore** and **Robin McKie**

TO ISRAEL they are a threat to its rocky hold over Arab territory. China is upset because its suppression in Tibet could be exposed, while Turkey fears its assaults on Kurds may be revealed.

Suddenly, commercial satellites are ruffling international feathers. And the particular focus of this fury is a new generation of privately financed spy probes, each capable of seeing objects only a yard across from the depths of space.

In the next few months, three of these new-generation, high-resolution satellites are to be blasted into space — launches that will raise critical issues of national security, individual privacy and the public's right to access of information.

At the heart of the problem lies the cold war technology of deep-space monitoring of Earth, recently privatised by Bill Clinton's administration to maintain the United States's lead in commercial satellite expertise. The high-resolution sensors of US spy probes — whose images were once placed before the eyes of security officials only — are now to become available for anyone with bucks to spare. The concept will revolutionise public monitoring of the environment, the scrutinising of peace agreements — and the gathering of television news. Experts predict the space imagery industry will be worth $6 billion by 2000.

Want to pinpoint the source of Russian river pollution spilling into the Baltic? Or do you want a picture of a bomb blast that military officials will not let you near? No problem. In each case, images supplied by companies such as EarthWatch, is due to launch its first spy satellite later this summer, and Space Imaging Inc and Orbimage, which are both due to put satellites into orbit next year, will meet those needs.

"It's a technology of freedom for enlightened countries but a tool of terror for closed societies," says Mark Brender, a producer at ABC television's Pentagon bureau.

"We're entering an age of transparency and governments are uncomfortable with it. Those who embrace it will be stronger."

What is causing unease is the unsurpassed power of the cameras and sensors on board the new satellites. Experts say these instruments will be able to take photographs with at least 100 times more detail than their predecessors.

Take Space Imaging's $500 million eye in the sky. It will be locked into a sun-synchronous orbit (orbiting only over ground and sea that is in daylight), a path that will allow the satellite to provide an image of any site on Earth once every three days. Photographs will cost as little as $100 per square mile of the targeted area.

Designed for the commercial market, these high-resolution images will benefit a wide variety of civilian purposes: from agricultural managers to urban planners, construction companies and public utilities. Such uses do not raise eyebrows.

What is causing concern is the idea that traditional sovereign rights are about to be redefined. According to the United Nations "open skies" policy, supported by the US, countries may still own the airspace above their territory. On the other hand, they cannot limit the operation of imaging satellites in space.

Hence Israel's fury over the threat that its Arab neighbours could use imagery bought from EarthWatch or Space Imaging to target missiles against it with pinpoint accuracy. Its diplomats are lobbying the White House to limit the resolution of pictures taken over its territory to 10ft on the grounds of national security.

Similarly, bird's-eye views of China's suppression in Tibet, Indonesia's campaigns against the East Timorese and assaults by Turkey's forces against Kurds are also causing international nervousness.

Part of the concern lies with fears that the media will be freed from their dependence on government information during international crises and will be able to collect pictures so detailed that they will resemble views from a helicopter ride.

Mr Brender's contention that it is a technology of freedom and transparency may seem pious. Still, the peaceful uses of spy satellite technology have precedents. President Lyndon Johnson once said that the first US spy probes — which revealed that the Soviet Union was not stockpiling H-bombs and missiles with anything like the ardour that American generals had claimed — had justified the cost of the entire space programme. Experts such as Arthur C Clarke agree, and argue that the availability of spy-satellite technology will promote international stability. Neighbouring countries will be less quick to threaten each other when troop movements or missile silos are visible to all.

"The free availability of space imagery will have a stabilising effect on world affairs," says Bryan Webster, of Space Imaging. "The less possible it is for countries to be surprised, the less potential there is for conflict."

Intelligence agencies are likely to be the largest purchasers of high-resolution images from these new probes. Iraq will buy pictures of Saudi Arabia, Iran will seek those of Israel, and India and Pakistan will purchase images of each other.

The biggest loser is likely to be the US government, which once used its spy satellites to maintain a huge military advantage over rivals — a superiority used with devastating success in the Gulf war.

Fearing it will lose this key advantage, the licences granted to spy-satellite operators by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration since 1994 include clauses giving the State Department the right to restrict broadcast data from a certain area when national security or foreign policy interests "may be compromised".

To the US media, the wording of these regulations is too vague and amounts to "prior restraint" of their constitutional rights. Instead, they propose that the media should be free to impose self-censorship when there is a "clear and present danger" to security.

Critics say a state such as Israel could easily be seen as a foreign policy interest and, if restrictions were allowed, this would set a precedent that could lead to other blackout areas to accommodate the interests of the political party in power.

"The State Department's notion of a foreign policy problem would mean that any time a client state says it will be upset by this kind of imaging then restrictions will be introduced," says David Bartlett of the Radio-Television news Directors' Association. — *The Observer*

At the heart of rebel causes

OBITUARY
Jessica Mitford

THE WRITER Jessica Mitford, who has died aged 78, was the second-youngest of the famous — or, in the case of the two who became fascist supporters, infamous — Mitford sisters.

It was Nancy, the eldest of the six daughters of the second Baron Redesdale, who laid the foundations of what became a Mitford industry; her novel The Pursuit Of Love (1945), sold a million copies with its lightly disguised family portraits. Jessica gave the industry a further push in 1960 with Hons And Rebels: a purportedly factual account of her upbringing and youthful adventures, enchanted middle-class England with its picture of upper-class eccentricities, private jokes, language and nicknames.

Jessica next took on a more demanding target: the powerful and devious American funeral business. The American Way Of Death (1963), funny, brave and devastating, consolidated her reputation, showing she was a writer with nerve and social purpose, not merely an upper-class entertainer.

Known to family and friends as Decca, or Dec, Jessica Mitford was raised in the Cotswolds. The sisters were Nancy; Unity, who was Hitler's friend; Diana, who married the fascist Sir Oswald Mosley; Pam, who wed the extremely rich and eccentric spectroscopist Professor Derek Jackson; and Deborah, the Duchess of Devonshire. A brother, Tom, was killed in the second world war.

Decca remained friends with Pam, Nancy, and Debo; but not with Lady Mosley. When she invited Decca's son to stay in Paris, Decca replied that she thought it a bad idea; he was half-Jewish and she did not want him turned into a lampshade.

As a teenager, she subscribed to the Daily Worker and pinned up the Hammer and Sickle in her room while Unity was pinning up portraits of Hitler.

In 1937 she eloped to the Spanish civil war with Esmond Romilly, a nephew of Winston Churchill. She laid a false trail for her family, who were distraught at her disappearance. Eventually, after Scotland Yard, the Foreign Office, and various British consulates had become involved, they were married by the British consul in Bayonne.

Back in London, they settled in Rotherhithe and joined the Bermondsey Labour party. A daughter, Julia, died of pneumonia aged four months. Next, vaguely hoping that Romilly could make some money lecturing to women's clubs in the United States, they went to Washington, and then to Florida, where Romilly worked as a barman. When the Chamberlain government fell, and was replaced by the Churchill coalition, Romilly signed up with the Royal Canadian Air Force. After training he was posted back to Britain as a pilot officer.



Jessica Mitford: Honourable writer with social purpose

In November 1941, Romilly was killed during a bombing raid on Hamburg. By then Decca had given birth to their second daughter, Constancia. She found war work in Washington, and in 1943 married Robert Treuhaft, a calm and humorous left-wing Harvard lawyer. They joined the American Communist party during the war and afterwards moved to Oakland, California, where their house became a centre for radical politics. She was placed on the US Attorney-General's subversives list and appeared before the California state senate "un-American activities" committee. It was the lack of a job, she and her husband asserted, that turned her to writing.

Their house was on the edge of the Berkeley campus of the University of California, so that in the sixties they were at the heart of every leftwing cause. Treuhaft's law firm was the first that any West Coast radical, black or white, in difficulties with the law turned to for defence.

On American leftwing causes, such as civil rights, she was serious; but communism was for her an unexamined extension of her 1930s anti-fascism; and in any case, living in California, she was able to insulate herself from the realities of Soviet-dominated eastern Europe, and focus instead on the injustices of the US. Argument was not an activity she enjoyed. She was less a communist than a natural anarchist.

Authority, wherever and however it showed itself, was a Decca target — always excepting the Communist party. She particularly enjoyed exposing rackets, as in the case of the "death industry".

America did not change her. Her vocabulary and accent remained pure Mitford: "Do tell," she would say, eager for gossip. Almost every year she returned to England with her husband, and rented a London flat. One night she would give a party attended by, among others, unreconstructed members of the old left, the next she would be dining with the Duke and Duchess of Devonshire at Chatsworth. Having her cake and eating it was a Decca speciality.

In later life, declining to grow old gracefully, she became a sought-after lecturer on the university circuit, delighting and stirring up students with her jokes and irreverence.

Her daughter Constancia, her son Benjamin, born in 1947, and her husband survive her. Another son, Nicholas, died in 1955, aged 11.

Michael Davie

Jessica Lucy Mitford, author, born September 11, 1917; died July 23, 1996

Ghosts of the gallant South

Americans in Atlanta are rallying to the flag — the flag of the Confederate states, writes **Diane Roberts**

MOST Americans consider themselves absolved from the past: Southerners, however, are prisoners to it, chained to a history that won't go away. The Olympic flame has been burning high over Atlanta, capital of Georgia, the self-proclaimed "city too busy to hate", but presiding over the Olympic technopolis as well — displayed a little less prominently — has been the controversial state flag with the Confederate cross and stars in the corner.

The governor of Georgia, along with black leaders throughout the South, tried to remove the battle banner of the Confederacy from the flag in time for the games. The Confederate emblem was only added in 1956 in outraged white supremacist response to the US Supreme Court's Brown v the Board of Education decision ending segregation. The governor's effort failed amidst cries from conservative whites that their "heritage" was under attack from the Yankee-fied forces of political correctness.

"Cultural ethnic cleansing" is what the Southern League, a burgeoning organisation of mostly middle-class, often academic, certainly angry, white men call attempts to wean the South off the trappings of its slaveholding past.

"We are not racist," declares Dr Michael Hill, founder and national president of the Southern League. He says the League does not believe in slavery, but he looks forward to a time when the South is a nation once again. If the 11 states which seceded in 1861 left the Union now, claims the Southern League, "its GNP would place it among the top five or six nations of the world and its laws would better reflect the natural conservatism and Christian roots of the Southern people". The South could, says Hill, return to a "natural hierarchy". Though he won't say this out loud, that means whites on top, blacks on the bottom.

In a piece of Faulkneresque irony, Hill, a tall Alabamian with a courtly accent and long beard, teaches British history at Stillman, a small Presbyterian college in Tuscaloosa, Alabama. Almost all of Stillman's students are black. "I always wear a little Confederate battle-flag pin on Robert E Lee's birthday, and they understand that I'm celebrating my culture just the way they celebrate theirs by wearing a Malcolm X hat," he says.

The Southern League is the brainchild of Hill and several other white, pro-Confederate scholars, "a Southern literati and intelligentsia", Hill calls them. They are not people who would be comfortable in white robes and hoods.

Southern League membership is, they claim, growing fast: perhaps 4,000 (they won't reveal actual figures) in 26 states, including non-Southern ones like Oregon and Arizona.

The League asserts the South as a separate "nation". The name comes from two of the League's philosophical inspirations. One is the League of United Southerners, an antebellum assemblage organised in 1858 by two pro-slavery aristocrats, William Lowndes Yancey and Edmund Ruffin, who fired the famous first shot that began the Civil War at Fort Sumter, South Carolina, in 1861.

The other source is modern and European: the Northern League of Italy, the separatists advocating a republic from Turin to Venice. Hill likes to boast of his close ties with Umberto Bossi, the leader of the Northern League.

The Southern League also looks to the Scottish Nationalist Party for ideas on how to separate themselves from the colonising power they call, almost like sixties lefties, the "American Empire". Hill and the League shrug off the SNP's socialist tendencies; they embrace any and all separatists, from the Parti Québécois to Plaid Cymru.

The League's politics are as melodramatic as Gone With The Wind. One Virginia member writes: "The monied power-hungry élites of America, along with their camp followers in government, media, education, and rainbow coalitions, are picking up where Sherman left off. The death of Dixie is their final objective."

But Hill insists he is not calling for armed insurrection against Washington — yet. "The South's position, constitutionally, in 1861 was the correct one," he says. The Civil War (which Southern Leaguers call The War for Southern Independence) was not about slavery — liberating African-Americans was just a pious excuse for an imperialist venture by Yankees lusting after power and the South's cotton wealth. The Southern League argues that individual states are sovereign and that the federal government operates solely with the consent of the states; Georgia or Alabama could secede tomorrow if only Washington properly understood the 10th Amendment.

"Farcical," says Sam Webb, a constitutional historian at the University of Alabama at Birmingham. Webb, and most legal scholars, agree that the supremacy clause of the Constitution ensures pre-eminence for the federal government. Webb points out that the 1787 Constitution was deliberately crafted to "emasculate the power of state legislatures" which were then (and some might say still are) out of control.

THE SOUTHERN League demands that Robert E Lee's birthday become a national holiday, just like Martin Luther King's. They want to return to British spelling (Webster's Dictionary is more "cultural ethnic cleansing"). They want control over representations of the past: lately they have been incensed by plans to place a statue of the late tennis star Arthur Ashe in his home town of Richmond, Virginia.

The myth of the moment is the Confederate battle flag. Gary Mills, professor of history at the University of Alabama, writes in the Southern Patriot, the League newsletter: "The so-called Rebel flag is the flag of the South — symbol of many good things about our culture and history that are dear to the hearts of Southerners — white, black and red." But it is hard to find black or Native American Southerners who feel that the Confederate flag signifies anything other than the slave-owning hegemony of the Old South.



Dixie revisited . . . A Confederate soldier at a gathering of Southern revivalists in Atlanta PHOTOGRAPH: J VAN HASSELT/SYGMA

Some of the League's spiritual allies are even less subtle. Charles Davidson, a Republican state senator standing for election to Congress from Alabama, says slavery was the best thing ever to happen to Africans who were "not civilised and given to 'voodoo, cannibalism and witchcraft' until the nice, Bible-believing plantation owners chained them in Jesus' name. I am sure that those converted black Southerners are most grateful today." Davidson declares the Confederate flag represents "less government, less taxes and Southern independence", appealing to the fear and loathing of the federal government growing in the nation as a whole, and the appropriation of victimhood by white Southerners.

Michael Hill is quick to point out that Davidson is not a Southern League member. Davidson's overtly racist rant may be too much even for Southern Leaguers — they preach "heritage, not hate". But however much the League wants to hide behind scholarly gentility, the likes of Charles Davidson could be their path to power. The Republican Party often plays the race card.

North Carolina Senator Jesse Helms's last re-election campaign featured a television advert in which a pair of white hands holds a rejection letter as a voice-over intones, "You needed that job. But they gave it to a minority." With the resurgence of overt racism in the South, the Olympic torch, symbol of diversity on the grandest scale, recalls not just Atlanta's Phoenix, rising out of the ashes Sherman left on his incendiary march to the sea, but the crosses that used to flame on nearby Stone Mountain and the 40 burned black churches across the South.

The New South — the South of Bill Clinton, of black mayors in Atlanta and Birmingham, of progressive organisations — is having an identity crisis. The fight, as the Southern League knows well, is over the ownership of a vexed history in a new South, backsliding toward the old.

Our woman in Hong Kong

Anson Chan is Chris Patten's number two. Will she step into his shoes, asks **John Gittings**

ANSON CHAN feels "Chinese", but not "Chinese Chinese". It is an important distinction to make for someone who is number two in Hong Kong and could become number one if she meets Beijing's approval.

Chan declines an invitation to say that the handover, in just under one year's time, means that Hong Kong will be "returning to the motherland". "Our concepts and values are different . . . We naturally identify with Chinese aspirations in wanting to make Hong Kong work well." And, she adds with careful balance, "in contributing to China's success".

Ever since Sun Yat-sen launched the first Chinese revolution in 1911 from abroad (and failed), Chinese "compatriots" from outside have had a problem in defining just how closely they relate to the mainland.

Chan, now Chief Secretary under Chris Patten, faces the future with a fiercely cheerful smile. Born in Shanghai in 1940, she left with her family in 1948. She has all the charm and determination with which that city's exiles conquered Hong Kong in the 1950s.

Chan talks cautiously about the process of "selection-election" by which a Beijing-sponsored committee in Hong Kong will choose a successor to the governor, Chris Patten. Her name has been trailed over the past two years as a potential new "chief executive" who will replace the colonial "governor". More realistically, she could be retained by Beijing as the number two, so that the civil service stays on board with her. The polls show she is by far the most popular choice in Hong Kong, but that is not necessarily a recommendation.

Last month, Chan was in London meeting the Foreign Affairs Committee, briefing the Prime Minister and making reassuring noises. "I'm neither in despair nor starry-eyed," she insists. "But no one has yet made money betting against Hong Kong." If she does sail through to the new Chinese horizon, she will be completing a path which began for so many young refugee children in the more austere fifties. She was spurred on by a strict grandmother who expected her "to study hard and be honourable". Graduating from Hong Kong university in English literature, she joined the British-run civil service in 1962, which offered women a better chance of advancement and, she adds sensibly, a good salary.



Chan: 'I am neither in despair nor starry-eyed'

Chan became known as an advocate of equal pay and women's rights. By 1987, she had risen to become secretary for economic services, at the hub of Hong Kong's economic life, overseeing the port and airport, telecommunications and tourism. Then in November 1993 she became the first woman — and the first Chinese — to occupy the post of chief secretary under Chris Patten.

She has acquired the reputation of being a "dragon woman" (roughly the Chinese equivalent of an iron lady). But the problem of identity persists for all Hong Kongers of Chinese descent. Most of those who want to leave have already done so; Chan is one of many who believe they still have something to contribute, even if they are not quite clear whether it is to Hong Kong or to China or to both.

"We are proud to be Chinese," they say, "and we want to contribute to China's emergence as a modern nation." Saying that is easy; the next part is more difficult. "We valued our years under the British umbrella and we are sure we shall continue to thrive under the Chinese umbrella."

In recent months, Anson Chan has been playing dinner games with Lu Ping, the top Chinese official who deals with Hong Kong, and other senior Beijing bureaucrats. Last year, he said he was too busy to meet her in Hong Kong. She then flew to London and on, with a secret invitation, to Beijing. That started people talking, especially since she dined with Lu Ping on her own: no notes, no Hong Kong minder.

In April this year, she flew up again for a more formal meeting. Her problem now is twofold. She must reject China's criticisms of Hong Kong's last-minute dash for democracy or else seem disloyal to the regime she still serves. But she must be ready to work with Beijing's alternative programme in a year's time.

China is most likely to appoint a figurehead chief executive from one of the formerly pro-British Hong Kong Chinese figures who have turned their coats in time. But while denying any ambition, Chan gives an air of confidence. Will her patriotism and diplomacy meet Beijing's unpublished job-description?

Woman of the West's veiled intentions

When Tansu Ciller was elected Turkey's first female prime minister, the nation's women celebrated. Now promises appear to have been broken and the party is over. **Maureen Freely** reports from Istanbul

WHEN she became Turkey's first woman prime minister, in 1993, Tansu Ciller was a secular dream come true. No one could be more opposed to Islamic fundamentalism than she was. It wasn't just that she saw Turkey's future in the West — as a US-educated economist, who had got her husband to take her name, she was the West. The consensus, even among the many westward-stepping women who did not share her rightwing enthusiasm for market forces, was that she had to be a good thing, if only because she proved that a woman could make it to the top.

In the lead-up to the general election last December, she worked hard to turn this goodwill into votes. She targeted many of her speeches at women who were nervous about the rapid rise of fundamentalism. She told them she was their best and perhaps only guarantee against the Islamic Welfare party (Refah). Now she has entered into a coalition with Refah, and the women who voted for her are up in arms.

Last month, the Federation of Women's Associations, headed by Necla Arat, filed two suits against Tansu Ciller — now, as a result of the coalition deal, in the dual role of deputy prime minister and foreign minister — for breaking her campaign promise. Meanwhile the headquarters of her True Path party has been deluged with furious letters and faxes. Not all of them are from women, but because women are at the symbolic centre of fundamentalism, it is women here who feel its threat most keenly. And the women who feel most betrayed — and embarrassed — are her former colleagues at Istanbul's Bogaziçi university.

In the few weeks I have been teaching here, I have not found a single woman who has a word to say in her favour. "There is a Turkish saying that sums her up," they tell me. "If you're going to sink, you grab at snakes." They claim now not to be surprised by her about-turn. When she was teaching here, they say, she was a male clone and never a good friend of anyone. She was always an opportunist and not sincere in anything she did. When she told the nation she was its mother, all she was doing was apeing the many generations of male politicians who had claimed to be its father. There was nothing modern about her brand of nationalism. Others accuse her of having used her sex appeal to advance her cause. There is even a story going around that she won Clinton over by touching his elbow.

What makes her critics angriest is that they claim she broke her campaign promise to save herself and her husband from an investigation into allegations of corruption. Last month, the government announced the biggest ever shake-up of the judiciary. The key figure to be moved is the official who was examining two separate enquiries into the couple's financial dealings. As he was also looking into allegations that the Refah party misused funds intended for Bosnia, his removal to the provinces might be seen by cynics as good news for both coalition partners. But, as one endangered official told me, increasing the number of Refah supporters is "the worst thing that could happen to our country, especially for women".

"Tansu Ciller has opened the floodgates to Refah because of her stupid behaviour," says Leyla Aysan of the Society for the Support of Contemporary Living, a voluntary organisation which, among other things, runs educational programmes for disadvantaged women and children. The organisation targets women not because of a Western-style feminist agenda, but because it believes women hold the key in the fight for secularism. "I'm sure Tansu Ciller doesn't want to live under *sharia* law, but she can always go back to the US. When people talk of freedom, is it coincidental that they also have second passports? I've never voted for her. I've always been suspicious of the right wing. When she was elected, we were all happy for about 10 days. But she hasn't done anything for women. Now, thanks to her, we can turn on the television and watch Refah men complain about how they can't go on holiday because there are no separate pools for women."



On the campaign trail . . . Ciller in happier times

Like many women here, Aysan is afraid that they want to turn the country into another Saudi Arabia. (Our first news of the coalition was when the wife of a deputy ran through the campus screaming: "She's sold us to Iran!") But not all women intellectuals think that an Islamic state would be a disaster for Westernised women. A notable example is Nilüfer Güoze whose book, Modern Veil, proposes that Islam could be a liberating force for women.

Even those who think that is hogwash still insist that an Islamic party has a place in government, no matter what kind of force it is. As Gülen Aktas, vice rector of Bogaziçi university, points out: "You can't disregard 25 per cent of the electorate and you have to remember that Refah is a new party that hasn't had its splits yet."

She predicts the Iran and Saudi-type radicals will leave and it will evolve into yet another traditional conservative party. "They are looking at the models and the majority do not like Iran, Afghanistan or Algeria." The future, she says, is what French newspaper Le Monde has begun to call "Islam soft".

Even if Islam here turns out to be medium hard, it's still misleading to think that it stands for all things traditional. There is more than one tradition in Turkey. Women have had the vote longer than in many parts of eastern Europe, Asli Davaz-Mardin, co-founder of the Women's Library, stresses. Recent research has shown that there was an active suffragette movement here dating back to the mid-19th century.

As every action eventually gets an equal and opposite reaction, it should not be surprising that the number of women wearing Refah headscarves and ankle-length coats seems to increase every day. What is surprising is that this is happening not just in the poor neighbourhoods where the party is strongest, but also in the universities. It is said that the women are paid to keep their heads covered, but if I kept my eyes covered in class, I would have no way of telling my fundamentalist students from their ultra-Westernised classmates. They all read the same books and go to the same Burger King and think the best film ever made is Pulp Fiction. The headscarves are getting the same education as everyone else. What will it do to their heads when they get married and return to their proper place in the home?

It is common knowledge that Refah owes its success to its women activists, who run a brilliant grass roots movement. Will the most educated among them always be content with second-class status? Although the party did interview women when selecting candidates for the last election, they did not select a single one. At first they said it was because the dress codes in parliament banned headscarves. When that didn't wash, they said they had assessed candidates on a points system and that no women had been awarded enough points. When that made them the laughing stock of the media, they claimed that they had asked women to stand and that the women had refused. Now the Refah women are saying that they are working for the party and want nothing for themselves, but the general public is not buying that either.

Instead they are talking about it. Everywhere you go, you hear people arguing about women and Islam and Saudi, with the same passion that they used to argue about Lenin and Mao in the Soviet Union. The new coalition has forced everyone to re-examine and defend what they believe in. It is no longer a question of looking East or West: this is where the next big ideological battle will be fought and won. That's how it feels, anyway. By betraying her campaign promises, for what appear to be the most selfish of reasons, Tansu Ciller may inadvertently have done the country a big favour.

Crude ideology behind 'bogus' asylum policy

Nick Raynsford, MP, is shamed by the treatment of an Iraqi Kurd seeking political refuge in Britain

LAST month a "bogus" asylum seeker came to see me at my constituency surgery. Ahmed (not his real name) is a 31-year-old Iraqi Kurd. He is married and has four children he has not seen for about a year. He fled to England in 1995 after almost 10 years of terror at the hands of Saddam Hussein's regime.

In 1986 he was shot at from the air by an Iraqi helicopter in an area that had been liberated from the Iraqi regime. Ahmed had fled there to avoid being conscripted into the army during the Iran-Iraq war.

In 1988 Ahmed was arrested, blindfolded and subjected to repeated electric shocks to his legs and genitals. The torture continued for two weeks. During this time he was frequently suspended from the ceiling by one leg, abused and whipped. He was also forced to witness others being tortured including one man having his fingernails pulled out and his feet set on fire. The man was subsequently executed. Ahmed knew that if he signed the confessions that he was urged to make, at a price for ending the torture, he would suffer a similar fate.

Eventually, after five months' solitary confinement, he was released. Three years later, when the Kurdish uprising began, Ahmed joined the freedom fighters in their doomed rebellion. His brother, who was also involved in the rising, was one of 5,000 Kurds buried alive by the Iraqi forces after the rebellion was put down. Ahmed fled towards the Iranian border with his family but returned home after Saddam Hussein declared an amnesty. He was arrested again and tortured. He remained imprisoned for a year until his release in 1993.

Last year, security police visited his home while he was away. His uncle warned him that if he returned his life would be in danger. At this point Ahmed realised that he had to get out of Iraq. He managed to get across the border into Turkey from where he was helped on to a flight to Britain. He arrived at London's Heathrow airport exhausted, frightened, confused and speaking no English. His friends in London met him and on the Monday helped him to make an application for political asylum.

Few people hearing Ahmed's story could fail to be moved. Few would disagree that he is someone with a genuine and well-founded fear of persecution in his own country. Few would dispute his claim to asylum in a free country that offers a refuge to victims of torture and political oppression. For more than three centuries Britain has enjoyed that reputation as one such country.

Ahmed's friends were surprised to learn that under the Conservative government's recent asylum-rule changes, Ahmed is classified as a "bogus" refugee. Ahmed's error was not to declare that he was seeking political asylum at the moment he arrived at Heathrow. The fact that he was exhausted and spoke no English might seem a good reason for this omission. It was only two days later that his claim for asylum was made.

But under the rules devised by the Government this short delay is treated as evidence that the application is bogus. In one respect Ahmed was lucky. Had he arrived in Britain recently, he would also have been denied access to benefits. Without the support of friends he would have starved while his application was being considered. This process can take years rather than months.

Is it any wonder that these disgraceful new rules have been twice overturned by the judges in the Court of Appeal? Is it any wonder that last month the House of Lords voted by a majority of three to amend these rules to allow a three day period of grace for new arrivals in Britain to claim asylum? The Government did not welcome this change and the House of Lords finally backed down in its confrontation on July 22, giving the Government a majority of 14 to reject the move for three days' grace.

It speaks volumes about the extent to which Government policy is driven by crude ideology devoid of compassion and humanity.

I highlighted Ahmed's case in the House of Commons at the beginning of this year when Parliament debated the benefit rule changes for asylum seekers. Yet Tory ministers proceeded to introduce these rules despite knowing the implications.

Ahmed's application for asylum has now been with the Home Office for more than eight months. He has heard nothing. In the meantime his wife and children remain in Iraq and he is fearful for their safety.

Nick Raynsford is Labour MP for Greenwich

Taking the bile out of Chinese medicine

Researchers in Hong Kong are looking for natural alternatives to remedies based on tigers, rhinos and bears, writes Andrew Higgins

FOR tigers in Siberia, rhinos in Africa and bears in China, the final fragile line of defence against extinction may be the doomed lives of rheumatic and feverish rats in a Hong Kong laboratory, injected with turpentine and chemicals to induce the ailments for which tiger bone, rhino horn and bear bile are prized as cures throughout Asia.

Rather than denounce traditional Chinese medicine as quackery or sex aids, researchers at the Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK) are testing the prescriptions of ancient medical texts and seeking substitutes for those which require the slaughter of wild animals.

"There is a hysteria in the West about the yellow peril looking for an erection," said Judy Mills, Hong Kong director of Traffic, an international group monitoring the wildlife trade. "There is a big myth that tigers are hunted for their penises. Some people eat tiger penises, but they are not what is threatening the tiger."

A bigger problem is the conflict of interest between wildlife conservation and a medical tradition responsible for a contraband trade worth up to $10 billion a year.

"A guy who poaches a single tiger in, say, Cambodia makes 10 times his annual income with a single shot," says Ms Mills. "It is like winning the lottery." There are now fewer than 6,000 tigers in the world, compared with 25,000 half a century ago.

Even in Hong Kong, where more than 150 years of British rule has entrenched Western medical care, surveys show that at least half the population also use traditional cures.

"We face a terrible dilemma and scientific research is the best way out of it," says Paul But Pui-hay, a biologist at CUHK, who is at the forefront of efforts to reconcile the welfare of wild animals with the health of humans.

He discovered how difficult the balance can be when his young daughter fell ill with a severe fever that resisted four days of treatment with antibiotics. Chinese medicine recommends rhino horn in such cases, for its "cooling" properties.

The fever finally subsided with the help of egg whites, a less controversial Chinese folk cure. "Thank God I did not have to confront an impossible choice," Dr But says.

Traditional medicine prescribes rhino horn for illnesses ranging from nosebleeds to delirium and strokes. Experiments by Dr But at the Chinese medicinal material research centre show that high doses of rhino horn do help to reduce fever but that the horn of oxen, water buffalo and the saiga antelope have the same effect, at least on laboratory rats.

His centre is conducting research on tiger bone, illegally used in Asia to treat rheumatism, muscle pains and paralysis. Researchers in mainland China believe the zukor, a small rodent of the Tibetan plateau, has many of the same properties.

The search for substitutes itself raises uncomfortable issues, however. The International Fund for Animal Welfare (Ifaw) has just raised $75,000 to support research in China into herbal alternatives to bear bile, which was listed in a Tang dynasty pharmacopoeia in 659 as effective against gallstones and is now widely used in the West in synthetic form. A bear gall-bladder can fetch up to $18,000 on the Asian black market.

But the research involves tests on laboratory rats, which many Western campaigners oppose. The group has asked China's state administration for traditional Chinese medicine not to use donated British money for tests on rats, but it accepts that Chinese-funded parts of the same programme will involve rats.

Such squeamishness mystifies most Chinese. Mindful that its population of wild bears was dwindling fast, China set up a number of bear farms 10 years ago to harvest bile. Western activists now condemn the system as cruel.

Practitioners of Chinese medicine, particularly its more conservative adherents in Korea, Taiwan and Hong Kong, question the use of Western science and sensibility to analyse their craft and rewrite their rules.

"Chinese medicine is far more than just chemistry. It involves an entire philosophy that cannot be understood by science alone," says Wu Ziming, a university-trained Chinese doctor and manager of "Eternity", a Hong Kong apothecary stocked with herbs, snake skins, seahorses, deer tails and dried herbs.

He accepts the use of alternatives to those animal parts banned by the convention on international trade in endangered species but says that Chinese medical texts — which include 330 herbal guides — provide more answers than research laboratories.

"Chinese medicine has developed over 2,000 years to become a complete system," Mr Wu says. "It is not just Westerners who care about animals. If they die out we suffer too."

Conservationists and Chinese healers are, however, slowly acknowledging a measure of shared interest. Each side has its fundamentalists but neither camp can afford constant confrontation.

A small sign of co-operation is the newly launched database on the chemical properties of traditional medicines at CUHK. But East and West remain far apart.

"People are not like cars," says Dr But. "It is not just a matter of using gasoline instead of diesel. With a patient, the doctor has to make far more difficult decisions."

Robyn Davidson asks: Where do you go when there's nowhere left to discover? Stay at home, advises **John Hooper**

Walk on the wild side

WHEN man stepped on the moon, there were two opinions — that it was a great thing: that it was a terrible thing. (Actually there was a third view: as it was clearly impossible, it had never happened at all.)

I was of the second opinion at the time. The thought of footprints on that lump of glowing rock was hideous to me. How long would it be before there were package tours up there? Plastic bags hanging about in zero gravity? But I lived in the Australian desert then, and that was about as close as you could get to "pure" landscape on this overcrowded planet.

I remember walking in parts of that desert where it was highly probable that no human being had walked before. I trod carefully. I wished to cover my tracks. I thought of that earth as Eden before the Fall.

But of course there is no such thing as virgin landscape. Aboriginal people, whether they had trodden on it or not, had certainly changed it — by hunting certain animals to extinction, introducing the dingo, encouraging the growth of grasses through the use of fire.

Some years later, I took a friend back to a particularly remote corner of "my" desert. There was no one and nothing for a radius of five hundred miles. I eulogised. I . . . boasted. We were driving along a dirt track which had seen not so much as a bicycle tyre in the previous six months. The track split into two. And on the tongue of sand between the two miserable little ruts, a sign said "Keep Left".

The sign infuriated me. I saw it as an invasion, further evidence of the grotesque need humans had to lift their legs and pee on everything they came across. It did not strike me as bizarre at the time, that this resentment at the invaders did not include me, my friend or my jeep.



Davidson: 'We have lifted our leg on everything'

How often have you heard people say that they no longer want to go back to a place because it has been "discovered". (And looking at the Costa del Sol, who can blame them.) Even so, it is a curious phenomenon. It comes hand in hand with a dislike of ourselves. With our alienation from the natural world, and from each other. This quest for the undiscovered means that there is nowhere that is undiscovered and, therefore, that there is nowhere left to go. We have lifted our legs on everything.

For our wandering ancestors, there was no concept of a nature pure because of the absence of man. Disturbing as his consciousness might be to him, man was nature. Then humankind began to settle, to plant crops, build cities.

The difference between "natural" peoples, and urban peoples, is that the former had a lot of time in which to learn from their mistakes and to come up with ideas (cultures) that would best protect their resources and their future. Besides, there weren't many of them and there were enough resources, generally speaking, to go around. It's not that they were/are morally or spiritually better than us — the Romantic view — it's that they developed compensatory systems in tandem with their natural destructiveness. And they had fewer technologies with which to speed that destructiveness.

But here we are, at the fag end of the 20th century, the same animal with the same instincts, living in an impenetrably complex global economic system where the relationship between what we consume, and the capacity of the environment to sustain that level of consumption is so out of whack, it is impossible to predict what the outcome might be.

I was asked the other day whether I thought travel was a good thing or not. I thought it depended upon what luggage you carried. If, for example, you are a certain kind of Englishman who believes that England is the best place in the world then travel would probably only confirm your prejudice. Or if you travel with a Romantic ideal — a desire to escape the world rather than apprehend it better — then there seems not much point in going.

Travel is only useful if you go open to the possibility of surrendering parts of what had formed you in exchange for the new perspectives offered by difference. If you go out of curiosity, and with respect. If you can enter a place *on its own terms.* But tourism is travel with its heart ripped out. Tourism imposes home environments on a foreign place.

What is the solution? It's a bit much to ask people who have three weeks holiday a year to spend it struggling with the confusions of an alien place, or to put up with discomforts when what they have earned is rest.

If literature was a compensation for the problems created by civilisation, then perhaps books provide us with a way out. Reading is like taking a journey. It's an entry into another world, another consciousness. It can satisfy curiosity, educate, excite imagination. There are too many of us: there are too many books. Ergo, stay home and read.

Robyn Davidson's latest book, Desert Places, is published by Viking, £18

Not waving but drowning

LUCY and I are experts. All of us have a particular talent or skill — something we do better than anyone else. What Lucy and I do better than anyone else is have disastrous holidays.

It's something we can only do together. Before we married, we both — separately — enjoyed normal, pleasant vacations. So you can imagine that our honeymoon was something rather special.

It began at a hotel run by a psychopath. On the first night, she fell out with a huge Norwegian and flung him down a flight of stairs.

Honeymooners are not meant to notice what's going on around them. They're meant to spend all their time in bed. We, too, spent all our time in bed. But that was because we immediately developed bronchial flu.

I had planned it all carefully, in such a way that we could enjoy not one, but two, Greek islands. Thus, halfway through, when both of us were in high fever, we had to get up to go to the port.

The two islands were next to one other. You could see the second from the first. But it transpired that there was no ferry between them. So we had to go all the way back to the mainland. And then find a hotel, because the ferry from Island One didn't arrive until five minutes after the ferry to Island Two departed.

I shall not easily forget the experience of dragging two leaden bags through the backstreets of Piraeus with a temperature of over 100. But later events have enveloped the memory in an almost nostalgic glow.

At holiday time, it has become safe to assume that, if neither of us is ill, it has to be raining. Or worse.

We went to Queensland and a typhoon — you remember the one that wrecked Mackay and Rockhampton some years ago? — defied all predictions to veer towards us.

We went to Florida and on the first morning I drew back the curtains of our motel room to find a traffic sign embedded in the rear of our hire car — there had been a hurricane in the night which we had been too jet-lagged to notice.

For a while, we were convinced it was all the fault of our lack of planning. We pored over brochures and compared rates. We even, God help us, had a personal interview with the tour operator.

For understandable reasons, we have recently stuck closer to home, which for us is Rome.

Last year, we went to Umbria — for that fortnight which everyone agrees saw the heaviest August rains in living memory. This year, we went to the Italian Lakes.

What could be safer than an area which features on a million chocolate boxes?

No sooner had we cleared the toll booths outside Milan than huge black clouds could be seen jostling each other in the foothills of the Alps. The next day's papers told us seven yachtsmen had been winched to safety.

We had not even unpacked and there had been a shipwreck. On Lake Maggiore. It subsequently emerged that the lake was contaminated by DDT.

I have no advice, no moral, to offer. Just a tip.

Don't look for us in other people's holiday snaps. Look for us at the end of the TV news — in the segment reserved for overseas natural disasters. Look for a tall man and a blonde woman — not waving, but quite possibly in danger of drowning.

Issigonis's 'poached egg' on wheels that brought home the bacon

Drawings of the Morris Minor, the first British car to sell a million, are up for sale, writes John Ezard

Sketches of the Morris Minor by Sir Alec Issigonis (right) who designed every detail down to the knob on the glove box and the door handles

HISTORIC drawings behind the making of the Morris Minor — the first, ultra-robust British people's car of the postwar years — are to surface on the auction market.

The Minor, with its distinctive split windscreen, was savagely dismissed as "a poached egg" by the car magnate, Lord Nuffield, when he first saw drawings in the late 1940s.

But it went on to become the four-wheeled success of austerity Britain, the nation's rival to the Volkswagen Beetle. It was the first British car to sell a million and launched the era of mass car ownership, putting 1.6 million families on the road.

The ill-advised ending of production in 1972 was mourned by hundreds of thousands of motorists. It remains an avidly collected vehicle, whose bodywork and engineering has outlasted cars built decades later.

Also up for auction at Christie's on August 16 are sketches for the revolutionary front-wheel drive Morris Mini, which displaced the Minor in the last triumph of the British home-owned car market. Both were designed by Sir Alec Issigonis, whose drawings are being put on sale by his family solicitor.

Issigonis — born in Turkey with a Greek father and Turkish mother, with whom he emigrated penniless to England — was a shy youth who failed his engineering exams at Battersea Polytechnic in 1923 because he was bad at maths.

"All creative people hate mathematics," he said. Though his parents wanted him to be an artist, he was obsessed with engineering. He got a job with the Coventry car firm Humber before joining Morris Motors at Oxford in 1936.

"He had some very fundamental new ideas about motor car construction," one friend remembered. "The first thing we decided in the make-up of this small saloon was that we would throw away the chassis and put the engine outrageously far forward." By 1942 Issigonis had finished a scale model of the Minor, designing every detail down to the little knob that opens the glove box and the door handles.

In 1945, the new Labour government asked the car industry to "produce a cheap, tough, good-looking car . . . in sufficient quantities to get the benefits of mass production".

Other manufacturers spurned the Beetle as a model to imitate. "We do not consider it represents any special brilliance and is not regarded as an example of first-class modern design to be copied by the British industry," Humber said. But at Oxford, Issigonis was allowed to pursue his vision.

He modelled the Minor partly on the American 1941-built Packard Clipper. Nuffield walked out when he first saw it. He called the designer "Issie-wassi-what's-his-name".

"Eleven years later — when we'd made a million — he had the grace to thank me," Issigonis said.

The car became pre-eminent in its market for its steering, road-holding and use of space. Morris Minor rallies at the Brooklands motor museum still draw 200 cars a year — one of them an airborne Minor, with wings specially designed by a Colchester man.

Christie's are selling Issigonis's three original design drawings for the radiator grill, dashboard layout and front bonnet.

The catalyst for the Mini was the 1956 Suez crisis, which paralysed oil supplies through the Suez Canal, bringing petrol rationing. It temporarily shattered confidence in big, gas-guzzling roadsters and flooded the industry with economical but unstable foreign-built bubble cars.

The prototypes, nicknamed Orange Boxes, were full of technological innovations. They had transverse engines, gearboxes that used engine sump oil, independent rubber cone suspension never before tried on a mass production car, and tiny, 10-inch wide wheels on a vehicle that could do 70mph.

First marketed for £496 and called the Morris Mini-Minor or Austin Seven, it became Britain's first classless car. Lord Snowdon and John Lennon drove it. The Queen was briefly photographed in one with Issigonis at Windsor.

Easy to park, with superb road-holding, it was taken to heart by youngsters as a good car for burn-ups. It was a hallmark of the permissive 1960s. The novelist Jilly Cooper had her baptism of fame with a newspaper column asking "Can you do it in a Mini?".

But, after Issigonis died in 1988, one executive said that — in contrast to the Minor — "we never made a penny out of the Mini".

Letter from Death Row James L Beathard

History in the present

FROM my cell on the third tier of this Death Row cell-block, I can see the prison farm's agricultural fields starting just beyond the compound's fences and stretching to the river on the distant horizon.

In the middle of one of those distant fields there are long lines of white dots like beads on a necklace, slowly rolling across the ground. They are, in fact, squads of Texas prison inmates whose uniforms are white, planting cotton in a long line in the hot summer sun.

If they were closer I could see that the faces and hands of most of those men labouring in the heat are black. At the ends of those white lines and at intervals across the fields I can just make out the shape of armed men on horseback, prison guards overseeing the convicts. Their faces and hands are mostly white. They are called field bosses and high riders, and they're addressed as "Boss" when the convicts speak to them, just as the men overseeing the plantation slaves last century were addressed.

It reminds me of the history of this place. Before the Civil War, this tract of land was known as the Ellis plantation and was one of the largest slave plantations in the South. After the end of the war many of the freed slaves stayed in this area. Around the turn of the century, the plantation fell into state ownership and was made into the Ellis Prison Agricultural farm, and then later the Ellis-I Unit prison where I live now, just outside Huntsville, Texas.

As I look out my window from this vantage point I can see not just the distant horizon, but also the distant — though not distant enough — past. I'm struck by the sad irony that many of the African-Americans doing time in those prison fields are the direct descendants of the same slaves who worked the same fields more than 130 years ago.

By the same token, the armed men I see on horseback are often the descendants of the whites who oversaw the back-breaking labour of these men's ancestors. Tradition is not always comforting.

Within a few weeks, these modern day slaves will be in those fields once again picking cotton as they have been doing for far too many generations. About the only difference I can see between then and now is that the men now have the added burden of being sprayed with herbicide and defoliant from time to time.

Since I'm on Death Row, I don't get the "privilege" of working in those fields, though I'm sure as has happened every year I've been here (nearly 12, so far), and certainly in generations past, a few of the men will die from the heat and labour.

Some things never change because in some places the land and the people who own the land will never let changes be made.

Notes & Queries Joseph Harker

WHEN food is served piping hot, who's piping — or where's the pipe?

IT WAS (and still is on more formal occasions such as Burns night) customary in Scotland to "pipe in the haggis" which is to say that the food was preceded by a player of bagpipes. Several haggis may be "piped in" at the start of a large sitting and if you were lucky enough to be served while the piper was still in full flow, your food was said to be "piping hot". — *Paul Adderley, Leichhardt, NSW, Australia*

DO CRIMINALS ever resemble their identikit pictures?

THERE is surprisingly little systematic research on this. The most recent study published by the Home Office in 1978 examined more than 700 cases where composites were compiled in the course of inquiries. In the 20 per cent of cases solved, officers reported that the composite was solely responsible for one in 20 arrests. With the new computer-based systems such as "e-fit", which have a vastly increased range of features, higher rates of success may be possible. — *Professor Graham Davies, Department of Psychology, University of Leicester*

RECENTLY convicted double murderer Paul Bernardo bore a stunning resemblance to his identikit picture, compiled from interviews with dozens of rape victims over several years. But a series of bungles by Ontario's various police departments allowed Bernardo and his wife to escape detection. They later abducted two teenagers and performed unspeakable acts on them, which they videotaped before murdering them. Police who called at Bernardo's home, following the release of the identikit picture, refused to believe that a handsome middle-class man and his beautiful wife would commit the crimes they were suspected of. — *David Corson, Toronto, Canada*

WHY does drinking cider through a straw increase its intoxicating property?

DRINKING a liquid through a straw will allow any volatile components to evaporate — partly due to lower pressure in the mouth during the sucking stage. As alcohol is more volatile than water (the main constituent of any drink), sucking any drink through a straw should release large quantities of this intoxicant. Once released as vapour, alcohol may pass into one's blood faster through the inner skin found in the mouth and gut than in the stomach itself, where alcohol is ingested. Any alcoholic drink may be made to taste "stronger" using a straw. — *Andrew Healy, Ashford, Middlesex*

IN New York I heard a representative of the Garifuna people state that there had been a pre-Hispanic African presence on St Vincent. Is there any evidence to support this?

SUCH evidence is well-documented. Ivan van Sertima reviews it in a chapter in Race, Discourse, And The Origins Of The Americas: A New World View (ed Vera Hyatt and Rex Nettleford, Smithsonian Institution). Most interesting is his quotation from Ferdinand Columbus, in his book on the life of his father, Christopher. He reports that his father told him he had seen "blacks" north of the place we now call Honduras. The Garifunas live in this part of Central America. Christopher Columbus wrote in his journal of black-skinned people who had come to Hispaniola from the south and southeast in boats, trading in gold-tipped metal spears. Samples of the spears were identified with those being forged at that time in African Guinea. — *Eötvös Anders, Brassdorf, Durham*

Any answers?

WHY do we use a tick-mark to indicate written agreement or approval? — *Michael Rowe, Leicester*

SEVERAL years ago there was a public debate as to whether it was safe to use irradiation to preserve food and, if so, whether such food should be specifically labelled. How was this debate resolved? Is the recent marked increase in the shelf lives of many perishable products due to irradiation? — *Peter Ainger, Warrington*

WITH which fool in mind was the term "fool-proof system" first coined? — *A Kassam, The Hague, Holland*

Answers should be e-mailed to weekly@guardian.co.uk, faxed to 0171/44171-242-0985, or posted to The Guardian Weekly, 75 Farringdon Road, London EC1M 3HQ

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Bungle in the jungle

TELEVISION
Nancy Banks-Smith

COL Blashford-Snell, the intrepid explorer, Adrian, a mild-mannered expert on mammoths, and a few others, who understandably preferred to remain anonymous, were looking for a mammoth in Nepal. And why not. There are few more entertaining and harmless ways of passing the time.

Blashford-Snell has a briskly military manner of speaking and that top-notch lisp, which has rather fallen out of fashion. He addressed the troops.

"We're here in Kathmandu," he began firmly, "and what we'll do from time to time is have these briefings. Now I'm going to ask Adwian to come and give us an update from the scientific angle."

Dr Adrian Lister said, "Obviously one can't walk up to an 11-foot high elephant with a tape measure and ask to measure it's head so please take as many pictures as you can."

They were looking for The Beast Of Bardia (Channel 4), a very large, aggressive elephant with big bumps on its head like a cave painting.

Rajah, as it was known, had chased Blashford-Snell and startled a young lady of his acquaintance. "I do want people to wemember that we are dealing with a potentially dangerous animal," he said. It was now dark and he was wearing a miner's lamp on his head. "The elephant is the largest animal in the world on four feet and wild elephants can be extwemely hazardous to your health."

He described how Rajah had once arrived by night, stolen his elephant, Honey Blossom, and chased him around the jungle.

"If that happens," he advised, "the place to go is the beach. Elephants don't like running on boulders. If it's a tiger, you are dealing with a different animal. Tigers love running over boulders."

It was dark but it seemed to me, in the glimmering of Blashford-Snell's miner's lamp, that the troops were looking at each other with a wild surmise. The sort of sensation which steals over you when, having struck up a conversation with a man in an all-night café, you realise quite slowly, like rising damp, that this chap is completely off his chump.

Bardia is a large Nepalese National Park, the retreating rump of what was once impenetrable, immemorial jungle. In places elephants are the only infrastructure.

So off they jolly well went ("It's going to be four to an elephant this morning!"). The grass, you noticed, actually was higher than an elephant's eye. They kept in touch by Tarzan type yodelling.

Rajah was elusive and Blashford-Snell raised their dashed spirits with liberal sundowners ("What you need is a Bloody Mary!") and pep talks ("The fact that we haven't seen him indicates he's out there somewhere"). After a couple of Bloody Marys that sounds quite logical.

Things often go a bit flat halfway through this sort of film. The mahouts made veggieburgers for their elephants and Adrian industriously collected dung for Rajah's DNA.

A signpost was found uprooted and tossed aside. The tracker said, "He doesn't like anything man-made inside the park." The culprit left a 22-inch foot print. You can measure the height of an elephant by multiplying its footprint by six — is TV educational or what — which made him 11 feet at the shoulder. On their last day Rajah was spotted half hidden in the jungle. His regular companion, a smaller but no less tetchy male, saw them off. This was undoubtedly the shakiest film footage I have ever seen.

Adrian, having had his dung analysed, found that Rajah was an ordinary Indian elephant but, by reason of isolation and inbreeding, something of a genetic throwback.

Rather like Col Blashford-Snell really.



Windswept . . . Bill Paxton and Helen Hunt are blown away by the special effects in Twister

Overwrought and overblown

CINEMA
Derek Malcolm

MICHAEL CRICHTON made **Twister** straight into a script with the aid of his wife, Anne-Marie Martin; these days he doesn't have to go through the motions of writing a novel first. The result is a great swirling of wind, assisted by virtuoso, state-of-the-art special effects illustrating a story so thin that it makes Gone With The Wind look biblical.

Apparently, in one old technically dominated epic, the leading man had to say "you're the one I love, I want to marry you and have kids by you, nothing else matters", as he lifted his lady from a car crash. But as he did so, her dress tore, exposing more flesh than the scenario intended. So all that came out was: "You're the one . . . shit!". Time was short and the crash complicated, so the director printed the take.

You feel that Jan De Bont, the Dutch director of Speed, could have similarly dispensed with dialogue any time one of Twister's five tornadoes swirled by, and it really wouldn't have mattered.

The plot concerns Bill Paxton's government weather scientist whose estranged wife (Helen Hunt) has assembled a team whose main task is to get as near as possible to the centre of tornadoes to plant sensors that will predict their movements and establish an early warning system. He is fighting a reluctance to join a corporate-funded competitor (Cary Elwes), who wants to make money, not history. He decides to take his new girl (Jami Gertz) along for the ride, thus making his almost ex-wife so jealous that she won't sign the divorce papers before they go into action. Naturally, an epic battle against twisters capable of lifting cows, trucks and suchlike, wrecking buildings and killing most of the cast, forges a new loving alliance between the estranged pair.

The movie is set amidst the vast farmlands of America's midwest and draws on memories of The Wizard Of Oz. But the new wizards are the teamsters of Industrial Light and Magic, who create the tornadoes on computers while De Bont orchestrates the actors round about. (Heaven knows what they had to put up with between their lines.) The result, though thin on the sustaining vitamins of character drama, is a whirligig watch where kinetics rule and nothing else matters.

Twister delivers (in spades) exactly what it intends while never aspiring to be anything more than a roller-coaster ride. If you don't expect golden memories, you'll get plenty of thrills.

Any film that dares to be only 79 minutes now that inflated budgets cause inflated time-scales ought to be sure of saying something. The originality of Hal Salwen's New York-based **Denise Calls Up** is that it says it all on the phone.

This, suggests Salwen, is a peril of a world too busy to keep in touch and is thus slowly but surely losing contact with reality. He takes the point deliberately to absurdist conclusions when nobody turns up to a birthday party and when Denise (Alanna Ubach) becomes pregnant through a sperm donation and seeks the father. On the phone, of course.

The film, probably made for the price of the phone bills, glories in its enclosed nature and strives hard but not entirely successfully for wit and wisdom. These people are busy, busy, busy doing nothing very much. Our problem is how to sustain interest in them even for the short time they're on the screen. Here Salwen, well supported by an unfamiliar cast of slightly off-beam characters, manages pretty well.

The means are sometimes predictable — the inevitable phone sex relationship that gives a new meaning to the word handset. But on the whole, it's an original effort, which proves that it may be good to talk but it may be better to do so face to face.

Portrait of the artist

ART
Dan Glaister

A *25-YEAR-OLD* artist from Derbyshire has won the £10,000 National Portrait Gallery's BP portrait award for 1996 with a self-portrait.

James Hague beat almost 800 entrants to win the prize, Britain's most prestigious portrait award, and will receive a £2,000 commission for the National Portrait Gallery's contemporary collection.

The award is seen as an important stepping stone for young artists and is credited with reviving the position of portraits in modern art. It is open to painters aged 18 to 40.

The prize was presented at the National Portrait Gallery by Jonathan Miller. The second prize of £4,000 went to Peter Andersen, and the third prize of £2,000 to Mark McPadden.

It is the first time Mr Hague has entered the competition, which is now in its 15th year. In 1994, he completed a degree in fine art at the University of Northumbria, and has been painting in France and Spain since graduating.



James Hague's self-portrait, which has won him £10,000

The award gained minor notoriety three years ago when the winning entry, a double portrait by Philip Harris, showing himself and his girlfriend lying naked in a dry river bed, was censored in some newspapers.

Tap, tap, tapping on heaven's door

DANCE
Keith Watson

YOU'VE got to have a monster ego to put on a show called Lord Of The Dance and then give yourself the starring role. But one thing Michael Flatley is not short of is self confidence.

Though he insists his less than dignified exit from Riverdance — the Eurovision spectacular turned dance phenomenon — is water under the bridge, you can tell from the glint in his eye that he is desperate to show he was the driving force behind its success.

Yet for all the rampant narcissism at its heart, there's no escaping the fact that Flatley has produced an exhilarating extravaganza that starts out as Riverdance part two but quickly develops a persuasive character of its own.

Though wrapped in the kind of ethereal Celticness that has proved so marketable and never fails to win the Eurovision Song Contest, the show throws off its opening aura of virginal purity to reveal a passionately sensual animal. Cheeky proof of that comes when the chorus girls take off their pastel shifts to reveal slinky black underwear — it's a Bucks Fizz moment with an extra helping of libido.

The show scores most strongly by building on the spine-tingling energy of the finely synchronised tapping feet that form the core of the Irish folk dancing of which Flatley is a master. Where Riverdance is one stunning routine and a fair amount of filler, Lord Of The Dance plays to its strengths, working its outstanding ensemble of dancers to their limits in a succession of demanding and lightning-quick routines.

At its best it whips up the slick excitement of Michael Jackson's Thriller era dance videos — and the ghost of Wacko Jacko hovers over the whole affair. As Flatley, torso artfully sweaty, rises from the dead (with a halo!) to banish evil, illusions of Christliness spring to mind. And follow the Lord Of The Dance refrain to its conclusion and you arrive, after all, at Jesus.

But such is Flatley's power as a performer this comes over as engaging rather than repellent. Flatley defies you not to submit to the hypnotic beat of his flying feet.

As he plays the puppetmaster to his rhythmic slaves, urging them into ever speedier, ever more complex step patterns, you can tell he must be a bastard to work for. That he makes his ego work to his advantage is his greatest skill.

You've heard this before — but dance does not often get this good. Expect it to run and run.

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Border town of imagination

ART
Adrian Searle

YOU COULD be forgiven for thinking that, like Heaven, nothing ever happens in Berwick-Upon-Tweed. No cannon has been fired in anger, no angry alliance of Scots and French has lain siege to the town's bastions since Elizabeth I had them erected here in 1558. But wait, something lurks. A group of stilled figures occupies the parade ground, black kites fly over the ramparts, and the face of a sailor, lost in his madness, looms from the lighthouse window.

Berwick is a town in a time warp, caught somewhere between the 16th century and a very unusual present. It has become a border town of the imagination, host to an inspired international exhibition curated by Pippa Coles, The Berwick Ramparts Project, until September.

Two black kiosks, like coffins or sentry boxes, stand beneath the vertiginous ramparts. In one hang rows of black umbrellas; in the other, black kites, dangling like sinister bats. Lucia Noguiera's Smoke doesn't attempt to compete with the beauty of Berwick but to disrupt it. On opening day, more than 50 black kites flew above the town and a flock of black homing pigeons was released, filling the sky with black flecks.

Umbrellas, kites, pigeons, a bench, a spy's kit — these images of espionage are Brazilian-born Noguiera's attempt both to recall the intrigues that bedevilled Berwick's history (the town changed hands between England and Scotland 14 times before 1482), and to counter the heavy hand of Heritage with intimations of magic and mortality.

Down in the enclosed courtyard of Nicholas Hawksmoor's Barracks, time has stopped. Twenty-two figures, by the Spanish sculptor Juan Muñoz, cluster in groups out on the gravel parade ground. They turn the space into a theatre of entrances and exits, a silent, still choreography of glances, gestures and solitudes. Muñoz's figures stand in the bowls of their shadows, facing each other like the dancers of a quadrille, or lean together and apart, frozen in attitudes of passing glances and inward silences. The entire scene is a perpetually stalled moment.

These sand-coloured, generic figures appear to be wearing voluminous dresses, while their features — mouths, eyes, fingers — have just enough detail and verisimilitude to allow the viewer a certain empathy with them. They are just a little smaller than adults, yet their mass seems greater than our own. Muñoz's Conversation Piece animates the space of the enclosed courtyard with a terribly affecting, haunting pathos, broken only by the echo of human feet and the cry of the gulls.

The gulls are making a fine mess of American artist Dan Graham's Two 2-Way Mirrored Parallelograms Joined With Balanced Spiral Welded Mesh. Maybe they object to the title. Splat! Gull poo doesn't do much for Graham's severely geometric, partially mirrored shelter, standing on a grassy knoll on the ramparts. Some young art lover has helpfully kicked in the mesh wall joining the two halves of the work. This is a pity, as the work could look beautiful and the damage destroys the illusions it sets up to engage the viewer in multiple reflections of multiple selves, which meld into further reflections of the surrounding sea and sky, leaving you on the verge of disappearance.

The disappearance of yachtsman Donald Crowhurst and the loss at sea of artist Jan Adler provide the leitmotif of Tacita Dean's work in Berwick's unoccupied lighthouse. She has montaged a picture of Crowhurst, who went overboard after a psychotic game of chess with God while becalmed in the Sargasso sea, on to an image of the lighthouse, displaying it alongside a film of the workings of another lighthouse, projected on to the circular wall of the building's belly. The film is a mechanical dance of prisms and flares and clanking machinery, of lenses revolving in their polished brass and steel mounts.

Dying sunlight glints on the turning lenses, refracting a lurid sunset; as night falls, the cold, blue, burning light comes on to the sound of a million cackling seabirds as a smudge of magnified light traverses the black rocks and waves. We shuttle between interior shots and the outside world. At last, Dean has made a work whose simple elegance — which depends entirely on being shown *in situ* — lives up to her aspirations, and makes the trek to the end of the pier worthwhile.

The Berwick Ramparts Project is a magnificent detour (so, too, is the town itself), scrambling one's sense of location, evoking past and future time and presenting one with a series of memorable enigmas.



The Mexican sculptor Gabriel Orozco with La D S, which features in his show at the ICA, London. The vintage Citroën car, a 1950s icon, has been cut up and reassembled PHOTOGRAPH: TRICIA [illegible]

Shaken to its foundations

Bombed out of its theatre, Manchester's Royal Exchange company has been forced to improvise, writes **Lyn Gardner**

BRAHAM MURRAY, the co-artistic director of the Royal Exchange Theatre Company, was in London on the morning of Saturday, June 15, when the IRA bomb ripped through the heart of Manchester. "It's bad news," the theatre's general manager, Patricia Weller, told him in a phone call. "We'll definitely lose the matinée today." In fact, the company has been unable to return to its building since the blast, save for a few brief sorties to retrieve box-office data and documents.

Although the blast appeared to stop at the Exchange, and its three distinctive great domes remain intact, the whole building literally jumped in the implosion that followed the massive blast. Structural engineers and insurance assessors are now investigating the full extent of the damage. If all goes well, the company hopes to return to the old Cotton Exchange in February 1998.

The warm applause that greeted the first performance of The Philadelphia Story at the Exchange's temporary home in Upper Campfield Market was as much a recognition of the company's achievement in being there at all, as it was for Josephine Abady's sharp, smart production of the play upon which the movie High Society was based. It is an evening of high fashion, stylish Frank Lloyd Wright-inspired sets, Frank Sinatra sounds and pointed witticisms. It is done with such élan that it makes you feel like a cat that's got the cream.

The American actress and Grace Kelly lookalike, Jordan Baker, gives a spunky performance as "virgin goddess" and heiress Tracy Lord who, on the eve of her second marriage, discovers a little compassion and humanity to warm her icy heart and realises, just in time, that a flawed love is better than no love at all.

"Patronage has gone out of fashion," the writer and journalist, Mike Connor (Richard Hawley, giving a punchy impression of a man having an internal boxing match between integrity and self-interest) tells Tracy cuttingly when she offers him one of her houses to live in while he writes a novel. The Royal Exchange wouldn't be quite as sniffy about accepting some of the loose change rattling around in Tracy's pocket.

The speed with which the company has been able to resume performances, despite the loss of its building, is in part a sign of the affection in which the company is held. But the Exchange's phoenix-like rise in Campfield Market is also due to an extraordinary stroke of good luck in the timing. The company had already made a £13 million lottery application for a major refurbishment of the seventies building. As a result, plans were already in hand to temporarily move the company to its mobile tent, which has taken the work of the Royal Exchange on tours over the last 10 years. The bomb has simply moved the plan forward six months.

The devouring tyranny of time

THEATRE
Michael Billington

IAN JUDGE is the Royal Shakespeare Company's specialist in feel-good comedy.

But how, one wondered, would he tackle that splendidly bilious cynic's Iliad, Troilus and Cressida? The short answer is: with great confidence and gathering awareness of the play's sombreness of mood.

At first, I had grave doubts. Judge's statement in the programme that he sees the play as a comedy bore strange fruit. The scene-setting Prologue was delivered by Richard McCabe as if he were a TV warm-up man.

But when it gets to the heart of the matter, Judge's production calms down; and what it brings out, with growing assurance, is the destructiveness of time which reverberates through the play.

Victoria Hamilton's Cressida is a remarkable creation. At first, she is all pert sweetness and giddy sexual expectation. But, in the course of her night with Troilus, she grows into womanly maturity which is shattered when she is cruelly traded for a Greek.

The great scene when she is ardently besieged by Diomedes is played on a note of tremulous uncertainty, which climaxes in a heart rending cry of "Troilus", followed by a swift and abrupt "farewell".

Joseph Fiennes's Troilus is no less the victim of implacable circumstance and time. He brings to the role a fiery impetuosity, which is evidenced as much by the way he draws his sword on the mocking Diomedes as by his passion for Cressida.

And, by the end, he has lapsed into an armour-plated cynicism. You feel that both he and his lover are as ruined as the patched-up, rusty corrugated walls of John Gunter's Troy.

But if any performance epitomises the play's mood, it is the superb Ulysses of Philip Voss.

He speaks the verse better than anyone on stage, makes the imagery come alive through manual gesture, and at the same time sums up, through his Machiavellian tactics to get Achilles on to the field, the corrosive cynicism that pervades the action.

THEY have already started demolishing London's Royal Court. At the end of Howard Korder's **The Lights**, the last play to be staged there before renovation, a couple of actors attack the back wall of the stalls with billhooks; we, the audience, in a reversal of the usual roles, are sitting on stage. It's a piquant moment as we watch the fabric of the ghost-haunted old place starting to come apart.

But any hint of false sentiment is banished by Korder's play which, like his earlier Search And Destroy, offers a tough, abrasive trip through the American urban nightmare. Director Ian Rickson's decision to switch the theatre round also makes total sense: action erupts on three levels as Korder offers a kaleidoscopic portrait of the madness and despair of what he calls "a large city" but which has the distinct smell and feel of New York.

Two characters symbolise the unhappiness of this seething city. Lilian, a shopgirl from out of town, impulsively steals a watch which she gives to Frederic, her jobless, no-hope boyfriend. She, in the course of a night out with a colleague, gets picked up by a city official and learns the hardness of heart that is the only means of urban survival. Frederic goes on to get roughed up by a loan-shark, joins a demolition gang and is eventually disowned by the desensitised Lilian.

Korder's point is that big cities breed personal despair and public corruption. His sustained metaphor is that of theft, including individual dignity and hope; in the words of one of the characters "nothing matters and everything sucks".

Korder gives a familiar theme a personal spin by the fidelity of his ear and the accuracy of his eye. Rickson's production and Jeremy Herbert's design also ingeniously exploit every nook and cranny of the building. And there are striking performances from Emily Mortimer, who has the gamine appeal of a young Audrey Hepburn, as Lilian; from Deirdre Harrison as her disillusioned department store chum; from Lee Ross as the helpless Frederic; and from Colin Stinton as a bumptious businessman who sentimentalises the city even as he corruptly exploits it.

Korder never quite gets round to condemning the whole capitalist system. But he takes one on a vivid journey through an urban hell and his play offers a fitting end to a chapter in the history of the peeling, dilapidated, much-loved Royal Court.





Young literary guns: from left, Andrea Levy, Meera Syal and Diran Adebayo, whose first novel won the Saga Prize MAIN PHOTO: KIPPA MATTHEWS

The new Brits make their mark

A new generation of British-born black and Asian writers is rising, writes **Maya Jaggi**

WHEN the American actress and writer Marsha Hunt — one-time star of Hair — launched the Saga prize last year for debut writers born in Britain of black African ancestry, she called it an "incentive to encourage a voice very long silent". Where, she lamented, was the "black voice of Britain"?

Funded by a Folkestone-based holiday company for the over-fifties, the £3,000 prize immediately bred controversy. Would it coax out talent or fence it off within a ghetto? Some took affront at the decision of the women's press Virago to publish the winners — male or female.

As the dust settles with the publication of the first winning novel, Diran Adebayo's Some Kind Of Black, the Saga prize looks set to take a modest place among grants and awards designed to bolster up-and-coming writers.

Adebayo, a 27-year-old north Londoner of Nigerian parentage, and Virago's first living male author, calls his novel — somewhat tongue-in-cheek — a "racialised observational comedy". Unlike much contemporary British fiction, it witnesses the vitality of a metropolis where one in five belong to an ethnic minority.

Adebayo tracks his young hero, Dele, amid the Afro-bohos, cult nats and love-has-no-colour-crowd of 1990s London and Oxford (where Adebayo studied law). As Dele's sister lies in a coma due to over-zealous policing, Dele contends with the more subtly racist cult of the black male as fashion accessory — cool, body-toned and good for CDs and drugs — a patronising image of "inner-city cachet" that Adebayo deflates with humour and vulnerability.

More striking than the political heat generated by the Saga prize is that its first winner feeds an incipient literary wave. When the prize was conceived, there were remarkably few published novelists who had been born in Britain of African, Caribbean or south Asian descent (Hanif Kureishi being the notable exception).

Yet Adebayo joins Laura Fish, Vanessa Walters, Andrea Levy, Fred D'Aguiar, Meera Syal and Bidisha Bandyopadhyay among those with first or second novels out this year. All can claim with irony the pedigree of Kureishi's hero in The Buddha Of Suburbia, as an "Englishman born and bred, almost".

The novels of this made-in-Britain generation have arguably little in common. Andrea Levy in Every Light In The House Burnin' and Meera Syal in Anita And Me recreate fictionalised childhoods in London and the Midlands respectively, while Vanessa Walters's Rude Girls bonds three young unemployed black women amid north London Yardies, ragga and raves.

Fred D'Aguiar, an established poet, visits the plantations of 19th century Virginia in The Longest Memory, which won the Whitbread first novel award, while Dear Future tacks between Guyana and London.

Laura Fish's lyrical Flight Of Black Swans, set among Aboriginal stockmen in the Australian outback, reflects the painful dislocations of its autobiographical "black Pom" heroine — the child of adoption by a white couple in rural England. But Bidisha's forthcoming Seahorses trawls London's 1990s media world with scant reference to race.

Yet the timing of these novels owes something to demography. Levy, in her late thirties, was driven to write her first novel — a 1960s childhood viewed through the prism of a parent's demise — by her father's death from cancer. He was among the Jamaican pioneers who stepped off the Empire Windrush in 1948. The children of post-war mass migration are gaining material ease and confidence, in Levy's words, "Finding our feet and our voice."

Many express a hunger for images of themselves. A sense of being invisible, erased from Britain's idea of itself and of its past, is an avowed spur for several of these authors to writing themselves back into the picture. "If Englishness doesn't define me, redefine Englishness," Levy insists.

There is also a dawning receptivity to that voice. Not long ago, writers would express resentment that publishers favoured the backward glance at "exotic" landscapes offered by those with memories of elsewhere (Salman Rushdie, Ben Okri, Anita Desai, Vikram Seth, Romesh Gunesekera) over fiction closer to home and to the bone. Now many editors and agents agree, the "black British experience" is hot.

The shift no doubt reflects the market drive for novelty. Kureishi helped prove the potential of a fresh take on Britain and Britishness. It also rides on transatlantic successes. The search is on — perhaps crassly — for the British Toni Morrison or Terry McMillan.

But the strides made in the early 1990s by the X Press — launched with Victor Headley's bestseller Yardie — and the Brixton-based promoters, the Write Thing, were crucial. Bypassing conventional rules to reach an untapped market, they helped shatter the iron premise that, aside from a few lone stars, the only black authors who sell are American and the readers who buy them are white.

WITH BOOK chains such as W H Smith and Books Etc now boasting "black fiction" sections, the mass market potential of a "street" genre no doubt reflects the pervasive input of black speech, music and style into Britain's youth culture.

Successful authors breed aspiring ones. Steve Pope of the X Press says: "Yardie was the book that got a lot of black people into bookshops who thought the books out there had nothing to do with their lives. It also started people thinking of themselves as writers."

There can be pitfalls, however, in publishers' commercial awakenings. Does what editors think will sell match what people want to write? Levy, author of a second novel, Never Far From Nowhere, scorns publishers' "herd mentality". She recalls being told: "Love your writing — but could you write a book like [Amy Tan's] The Joy Luck Club?" She adds: "They wanted the 'immigrant experience' to be formulaic. There's pressure to stay within the realms of identity, of the black experience in Britain."

D'Aguiar, wary of the "black British" tag, says: "It's very hard to pin down such a thing as the black experience — the idea that black people move through life in a particular way." Levy and D'Aguiar cite their working-class roots as more crucial an influence than growing up black.

Meanwhile in the scramble for the here-and-now, the past and foreign settings risk being swept aside. Victor Headley was once quoted in the Times as saying "so-called black intellectuals" like Ben Okri and Caryl Phillips were "not relevant to what we're thinking about in the black community . . . They don't know what's going on."

Aside from whether a monolithic "black community" exists or what it thinks about, the impoverished notion of "relevance" in this blacker-than-thou pitch would strait-jacket any writer. Yet Headley's comment does highlight a growing debate among some young black readers impatient with the spate of historical fiction since the late 1980s, perhaps exemplified by Phillips's diaspora novels. Why hark back to 300 years of slavery? Why not a black Kureishi?

Yet that historicism has in a sense laid the groundwork for new writing. "If you don't know where you've come from, you don't know where you're going," Phillips says. It also writes the black presence back into the British landscape — from Victorian Londoners to second world war GIs. In chronicling the 1960s and 1970s, Syal and Levy take up the baton, telling a fragment of a collective saga through individual stories.

Jonny Geller, the literary agent at Curtis Brown whose list includes Adebayo and the 17-year-old Bidisha, says: "I hope historical novels don't get pushed aside. Every culture needs to know where it's coming from before it can go forward. It's the same with Irish or Jewish writing. It develops through a firm knowledge of what's gone before."

Along with the Saga quest for an absent "black voice of Britain" came ignorant statements in the press about there being "no history of black British writers". Literature by black people in Britain dates from the 18th century. If you had to be born in England to leave a mark on English letters, Swift, Conrad and T S Eliot would not have made it into the canon.

Ferdinand Dennis, whose forthcoming second novel, The Last Blues Dance, is rooted in the inner-city present, warns: "There should be an awareness among writers that they stand within a tradition. That way some of them — or their promoters — might stop thinking they're inventing the wheel."

Marsha Hunt insisted: "The black British voice is different to that of the immigrant American, Nigerian or Jamaican." Formative years spent on these shores may well make for a unique experience. And, as Adebayo points out, each generation finds its own voice.

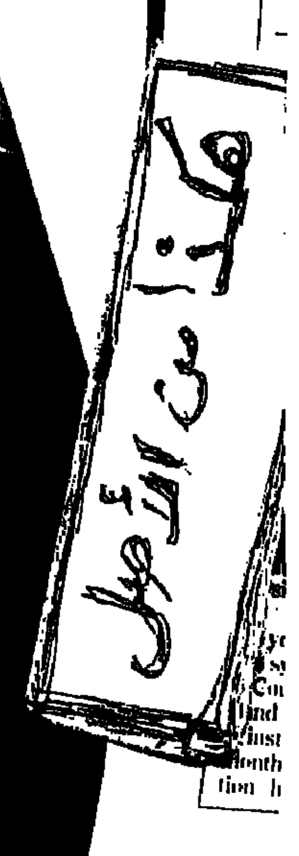
BUT MANY novelists born abroad have also recorded a distinctively British experience. As D'Aguiar notes: "Black creativity is not new, though a broad awareness of it is." There are no clean borders between the imaginative terrain of migrant writers, others brought as children, and those born on this soil with an ineradicable heritage from elsewhere. As Syal's British-born Brummie heroine puts it: "There was a corner of me that would be for ever not England."

To force writers under exclusive national rubrics, misses the point that "post-colonial" writers exploring Britain's imperial past and post-imperial present have long eroded the boundaries between here and there, "us" and "them".

Rushdie said: "The migrant is not simply transformed . . . he also transforms his new world." An openness not just to their own narrowly defined "ethnic community" but to the vitality of a multi-racial Britain often ignored in fiction, marks out what Robert Lee in Other Britain, Other British (1995, Pluto) terms "post-migrant" novelists.

Penelope Lively patronised David Dabydeen's first novel, The Intended, in 1991 with the well-meaning statement: "We badly need good novels about the immigrant experience in Britain." But far from interpreting the "immigrant experience" to curious outsiders, these novelists shatter myths of identity at Britain's heart. To read them is not simply to understand "them" but to understand "ourselves".

Some Kind of Black by Diran Adebayo, Virago, £9.99; Rude Girls by Vanessa Walters, Pan Books, £5.99; Every Light In the House Burnin' by Andrea Levy, Hodder Headline, £5.99 and Never Far From Nowhere by Andrea Levy, Hodder Headline, £12.99; Flight of Black Swans by Laura Fish, Duckworth, £14.99; Anita and Me by Meera Syal, Flamingo, £9.99; The Longest Memory by Fred D'Aguiar, Chatto, £5.99 and Dear Future, Chatto, £14.99



Sovereign of the word

Laura Cumming

My Other Life: A Novel
by Paul Theroux
Hamish Hamilton 440pp £16

THERE'S a chapter in this book, already notorious, where Paul Theroux is invited to sup with the Queen. The guests gather silently like participants in a seance, nervously awaiting the "royal ectoplasm". A small muffin-faced woman sidles past, but Theroux instantly recognises the Elizabethan profile. "That reminds me, I must buy some stamps," he quips. Nobody listens. Nobody pays attention to Theroux all night. Prince Philip is so uninterested in this alien American that he turns aside in strenuous disgust. Another chance for a quick, sharp profile: "that nose looked like a handle on the front of his face". The Royals may command a captive audience, but in the private world of writing, Theroux has sovereign control.

My Other Life is so brazenly personal that you read, as it were, with your hand across your eyes. Theroux — or his doppelgänger if you take that "novel" literally — reveals himself in the least sympathetic light. He is vain: nearly every chapter incorporates swollen tributes from his fans. He is goatish: not even nuns escape his lecherous regard. And his irascibility, so piquant in the travel writing, is now far beyond Prince Philip's in its state of advance. But set against this the pure quality of the prose, evocative, painstaking, comic, even tender, and you soon see the discrepancy at the heart of the book. What Theroux's narrative ingeniously attests is that the man and the author aren't one and the same.

The two parties encounter each other in devastating ways: at least one reason for arranging truth as fiction. Although the book follows

Theroux: the man and the author aren't one and the same

the outline of Theroux's life — teaching in Africa and Singapore, prosperity and marriage in rain-blackened London, catastrophe then flight to the Pacific's sunnier shores — each chapter is plotted as a dramatic confrontation. In Yorkshire, Theroux gets lost "after a winter sunset, when the way is made visible by the pale sky showing in puddles on the muddy path". Without knowing his identity, a woman takes him in. Spying his books on the shelves, Theroux despicably solicits her opinion. The response is so titillatingly ecstatic he toys with the sexual advantages of revealing his name. But his hostess is dreaming of that Other Man, the writer, "rather shy . . . very gentle . . . I'd so like to meet him." Theroux is dogged by mistaken identity. Women regularly confuse him with the writer, a wanderer always ready to listen; they notice his chill self-absorption too late. When his marriage fails, Theroux returns to America, but cannot write without family life. One night, he sees some tattooed kids taking out a video of one of his films. Pathetically, he tries to impress them. They don't believe that screenwriting exists: "'That's like stupid, isn't it? No one writes movies, it's all photography and acting'." Next day one of them excitedly raises his hopes: "'We had your book in the consignment shop! The guy, he's bummed out . . . In a little cabin, right?' I fell silent. I said, 'That's Walden, by Henry David Thoreau.'"

This may be literary masochism, but it's comically redeemed: everything in the book has a counterweight. Against the Festschrift Theroux has written for himself, the list of much-praised titles, the record of awards, the plaudits from revered colleagues like Anthony Burgess ("I read your book, Railway Bazaar, once a year"), there is another life. With pitiless clarity, Theroux describes his lack of friends, his envy of other travellers, his resurgent lust "like a pile of greasy rags which, left in the darkness . . . begin to heat as though from the growing density of their very gases". As divorce approaches, the book conspicuously deepens into fiction. Theroux alludes to the rift only cryptically, in a sad little tale about squandering champagne.

Facts, of course, can tell you nothing: Theroux is elaborating to get at the truth. Whatever he learned about his private self while writing is never explicitly vouchsafed. Indeed, he pointedly includes a scene in which a psychiatrist advises him to read his own novels. But he gives a wonderfully detailed account of his writing life: the promising early paragraph, the afternoon wasted at the pub. In the garden, he observes a trickle of water to be turned "into a river, with ox-bows and mud-slides". Inside the house, he agonises over a sentence which resolves itself as you read. When a film director considers him for the part of a writer, he can't resist completely rejigging the script. He doesn't get the part, but the writer in him is, secretly, relieved to get back to work on this brilliant book.

Comedy on an infinite scale

James Wood

Infinite Jest
by David Fost Wallace
Little Brown 1,077pp £17.99

TS ELIOT praised, in the sermons of the Elizabethan bishop Lancelot Andrewes what he calls "relevant intensity"; much American comic writing of the past 30 years has been propelled by its irrelevant intensity. In particular, the irrelevance that a super-abundant modern culture presses on us. This fertility offers wondrous possibilities for comedy, and obvious dangers, the biggest danger that of parallelism: that a novelist will simply bloat his representation of America to match the size of America's bloatedness.

Irrelevant intensity tends towards two modes, both popular in David Foster Wallace's astonishing and vast epic of contemporary American culture. One of these modes is a zany, technical specificity, whose pseudo-precise language is borrowed from the discourse of science and technology, and whose specificity is wildly in excess of the actual importance of the data; the second mode is the comic and pointless accumulation of brand names and other details.

This gigantic novel — 980 pages of narrative with 100 pages of notes — is rich in comic accretion. Foster Wallace enjoys being pseudo-learned: "When Schtitt exhales he makes little sounds variant in plosivity between P and B", and he encourages his characters to speak and think similarly. Hal Incandenza, one of the book's protagonists, is given to observations like this: "The mattress, a Simmons Beauty Rest whose tag said that it could not by law be removed, now formed the hypotoneuse of a right dihedral triangle whose legs were myself and the bed's box spring."

The novel is set in the first decade of the next century, and in this new dispensation (after "the Limbaugh administration") years are no longer marked by numerals, as 2004 or 2010. Instead, a cash-greedy government arranges for years to be sponsored by companies, and then to be named Chinese-style — "Year of the Purdue Wonderchicken", "Year of the Whopper" and "Year of the Trial-Size Dove Bar".

This extraordinary novel is somewhat puerile yet very alive. The kind of comedy that Foster Wallace enjoys needs the kinesis of great narrative length; individually, his gags seem spindly and perhaps not very funny. His genius lies in his devotedness to his world. But the book is patchy and the reader must learn to pick out the good tunes from the bad. Sentences and whole pages are marvels of comic concentration; followed by two pages of flabbiness and release.

The narrative squalls around two centres — a tennis academy called the Enfield Tennis Academy (ETA) in Boston; and Ennet House, a drug and addiction treatment house next door. So the novel's protagonists are, mainly, drug addicts, very good tennis students, and crazy Québecois separatist terrorists — and all these people are comic because they are removed from human motivation and turned into manic machines.

Here, for instance, is one of the tennis academy's students, out on her evening walk, squeezing tennis balls: "Out for a staff-ordered weight-management post-dinner stroll, squeezing Penn 5's in both hands, in ETA sweat pants and with an enormous violet bow either scotch-taped or glued to the blunt rounded top of her hair." The tennis student is "staff-ordered", but this still allows for Foster Wallace's deliberate comic vagueness — the bow is "either scotch-taped or glued" to the hair.

It is hard to sustain interest in a very long book in which the comedy of character has been surrendered to the comedy of culture. But Wallace is a superb comedian of culture.

His exuberance and intellectual impishness are a delight. The intensities, in all their sublime irrelevance, seem, by the end of the book, both relevant and minatory.

Boyhood, boats and books

Desmond Christy

Not Entitled, A Memoir
by Frank Kermode
HarperCollins 263pp £18

MEMOIRS. A chance to tell the world of how you blamed a servant for what you stole, of the neglect of your children, of the women and men you betrayed, and reveal what a good person you really were despite these sins. Along the way you will mention all the great personages who crossed your path: Goethe in Weimar, Napoleon in Moscow, Tony Blair at Blackpool.

Frank Kermode — let's drop the "Sir" as he is "not entitled" — does none of this. His memoir breaks naturally into three parts — boyhood, boats and books — and then seems to divide again, into what is on the page and into troubling silences. In this gentle, honest, well-mannered, almost holy book, being "not entitled" crops up again and again. Surely so distinguished a man as Kermode — regarded by many as the finest living critic writing in English — can claim to be somebody in this world, to be one of those who belong? Why is he considering so carefully matters of entitlement? The first answer is that he is not thinking of himself at all, he is thinking of his parents and all of those like them who never laid claim to very much in the way of property, wages or education.

Kermode was born on the Isle of Man where his family lived in a "uterine tenement" and then in a "low rental house provided by the town council". His father had taken a job as a storekeeper, a plucky man with a son who was bookish and clumsy. A son who belonged to his mother. His boyhood included a chat with God (asking Him if oranges tasted the same to all those who ate them) and a brush with despair and sin (faking a school report). But in the end he didn't need academic fakery to claim a scholarship to Liverpool University. Hitler interrupted his studies and Kermode joined the navy. Now we discover further meanings of the book's title. "Not Entitled!" is what is shouted out in the navy when a sailor has been fined so much that he is not entitled to any pay at all.

The rest of the book, and the life, is literature, and if it isn't, Kermode is not going to tell you about it. He does not tell you about the women in his life, or much about his professional work or his meetings with Napoleons or Matthew Arnolds, or Paul de Man.

He does tell us, in a chapter straightforwardly called "Errors", about how he discovered that Encounter, which he was co-editing, was being funded by the CIA, but he only tells us, you feel, out of a sense of duty. He does tell us about the "McCabe affair", but does not call it that because this controversy was not, he insists, about a lecturer refused a post but about the frustrating efforts to reform the way English is taught at Cambridge.

So we have another sense of "not entitled": things a reader is not entitled to be told, even to ask, and about which the writer is not entitled to tell. In a book that is full of scruple he allows himself a sense of an ending by contemplating a statue of Diana given to him by some friends. "Henceforth she will preside over this garden and the commonplace house in it, and as long as she belongs there, I will belong there also, or be as close to belonging as I am entitled to be, for as long as I am entitled to be." Existence itself becomes a matter of entitlement.

Design for life

Paul Evans

A STRANGE thing happened at the Hampton Court palace flower show. Having struggled through the crowds looking at designer gardens, nursery displays, floristry exhibits and acres of stands selling every kind of garden nick-nackery imaginable, I stumbled into a mirage. This is it, I thought, truly a garden-for-our-time. Here was a little muddy pond, water covered in duckweed, a few elegant reed-mace shooting from the margins, an old bicycle wheel and bits of wood sticking enigmatically from its weedy depths.

I spent some time admiring the way the pond had been undesigned, allowing Nature to overwrite the ego of the designer. It reminded me of childhood ponds, teeming with newts and beetles, long since swept away and tidied from the landscape. Here was a robust, defiant, vibrant little puddle of wildness in a world obsessed with order and instant gratification. I had, of course, got it all wrong.

Next to the duckweed pond was another of the same size but clean and tidy, with bright red waterlillies and the fussy designer nonsense that goes with contemporary water gardens. The display was meant to be a Before and After lesson, illustrating how the designers could transform a worthless swamp into a sparkling new suburban paradise. "A pox on 'em," I muttered and wandered back into the milieu.

The display gardens on show at Hampton Court, like those at the famous Chelsea Flower Show, invariably end up on the wrong side of naff. Apart from being beyond the reach of the thousands of ordinary punters pressing against them with a mixture of lust and envy, they have a "knowingness", which robs the innocence from a relationship between human creativity and Nature at the heart of gardening.



ILLUSTRATION: BARRY LARKING

Back in the days when Henry VIII was stomping around his Privy garden (not to be confused with garden privy) here at Hampton Court palace, garden plants were few and simple, and garden design, like Henry, a brutally symmetrical symbol of power and dominion. I wonder what Henry would have made of the bizarre scene of hundreds queuing at the Cambodian garden, built for the Christian Aid charity, to tread on fake land mines hidden under exotic foliage. I'm sure the people trying to raise awareness of this terrible legacy of war-zones around the world had not intended to provide a cheap thrill for the British who love a bit of sex and violence with their gardens. And I wonder when the first Northern Ireland riot garden will appear.

Despite the wonderful diversity of plants at the flower show, the way they furnish gardens and the way gardens fit into culture and landscapes shows that the relationship between people and Nature is even more ambiguous than it was during the Middle Ages; ambiguous because attempts at naturalness conceal environmental guilt tempered with a fierce desire to stamp individual personality on the world and a fear of the wild spirit howling at the garden gate. Shanghaied from their ecological relationships with each other, garden plants have become sensual objects to decorate surfaces and embellish egos. They carry messages to those who read the sexually charged language of gardening that here is a person of taste and sophistication.

So what does my muddy, weedy little pond tell me? It says that in the rough, commonplace, vernacular landscapes lies an artless, innocent, accidental relationship with Nature which has little if any value to society. And yet here is a thriving, untidy exuberance. Here's one in the eye for those who would design us into oblivion.

Chess Leonard Barden

FEW orthodox chess primers will give you this advice, but one of the best short-cuts to success for ambitious juniors and club players is to learn some offbeat openings which contain plausible traps.

If you are interested in this route, then the Russian master Iakov Neistadt's new booklets — Winning Quickly With White and Winning Quickly With Black (each £12.99 from Cadogan) — both contain useful ammunition.

Neistadt's method is based on miniature games, which he defines as a maximum 18 moves. I don't completely agree with some of his choices — old favourites like the Vienna, the Goring Gambit, and the Ruy Lopez with an early d4 get scant treatment — but he still has some telling examples of rare systems based on plausible moves that have a high strike rate in practical play.

Here's one that was new to me, which has occurred at least three times over the board and has a respectable pedigree; the white player in this game is a 2,600-plus grandmaster.

Rozentalis-Mikenas, Vilnius, 1981

1 e4 Nf6 2 Nc3 d5 3 exd5 Nxd5 4 Bc4 Nb6 5 Bb3 e5?! Nc6 is safer. **6 d3 Nc6 7 Nf3 Bg4 8 h3 Bh5?** Black should settle for Bxf3, but pinning the f3 knight is a normal plan in Alekhine's Defence.

9 Nxe5! A sophisticated version of the ancient Legal Trap (1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 d6 3 Bc4 Bg4 4 Nc3 h6? 5 Nxe5! Bxd1? 6 Bxf7+ Ke7 7 Nd5 mate).

Bxd1? Black should struggle on a pawn down by Nxe5 10 Qxh5. **10 Bxf7+ Ke7 11 Bg5+ Kd6 12 Ne4+ Kxe5 13 f4+ Kd4 14 Rxd1!** Threatens 15 c3+ Ke3 16 0-0 and Rf3 mate.

Nb4 Black plans to meet 15 Bxd8 by Nxc2+.

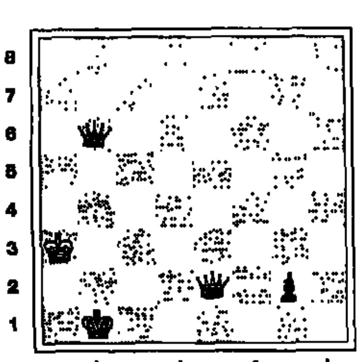
15 c3+ Ke3 16 0-0 Nxd3 Black expects his king to escape by 17 Rf3+ Kxe4.

17 Ng3! Resigns.

Chessplayer of the month must be Claude Bloodgood. The 71-year-old convicted murderer, serving a life sentence in a Virginia prison, has become No 9 in the United States — which has some 50,000 active players — by playing 1,700 rated games against other inmates. "There seems to be a flaw in our rating procedures," said a US official.

Britain's prodigy Luke McShane, aged 12, is attempting to become the youngest ever UK international master at the sixth annual invitation sponsored by accountants Smith & Williamson near Guildford. British champion Matthew Sadler set the current age record at 13. Meanwhile Michael Adams has been voted the Leigh-BCF player of the year for the third year running.

No 2432



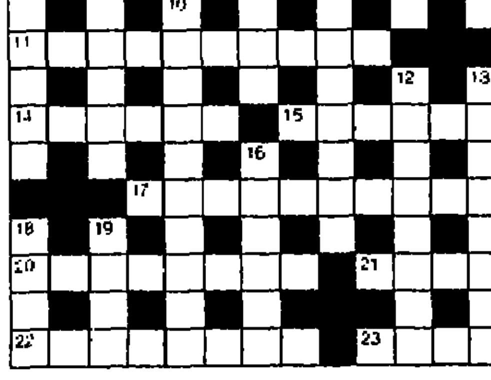
Black (to move) was one square from promoting his pawn in this 1958 Russian game. He advanced it to g1, and then hesitated. "Which piece do you want?" prompted White. As soon as he heard "A queen", White banged down his reply and it was clear that the game was drawn.

Then the arbiter intervened. He ruled that a verbal announcement did not constitute a move, so that Black could still promote to any piece bar a king. After some hesitation, Black substituted a rook at g1. White again banged out his answer, and they agreed a draw.

What were White's two moves?

No 2431: 1 Qc8+ Rb8 2 Ke7! Rxc8 3 Bg2+ Kb8 4 Ba7+ Kxc7 5 b6 mate.

Quick crossword no. 325



Across

1 Main part of animal (4)
3 Illuminated as a spectacle (5-3)
8 Roman garment (4)
9 Diplomatic etiquette (8)
11 Emily Brontë hero (10)
14 Renounce one's views (6)
15 Doorway (6)
17 Stern and relentless (10)
20 Quality of popes? (8)
21 Built-up area (4)
22 Finished and whole (8)
23 Grudging admiration (4)

Down

1 Meat shop — look! (8)
2 Two hour period at sea (3,5)
4 Aristocratic (6)
5 Not with it (3,2,5)
6 Scarcity (4)
7 Roof or wall covering (4)
10 Extraordinary (10)
12 Obstinate (8)
13 Channel Island (8)
16 Cupboard (6)
18 Smart (4)
19 Secretive person (4)

Last week's solution

MACHIAVELLIAN
E I M E A N E
TOR DUSORIVER
A C E S D E V
LAUNCHED TRIO
M I L W T U
PESTLE CARESS
E T E C T D
ROAM FARCICAL
T N B R H O A
UNCROWNED MAT
R E L A O M C
BUSHTELEGRAPH

Bridge Zia Mahmood

I'M writing from Phoenix International Airport on the way home from San Francisco after the US team trials, where I was part of a strong five-man squad.

We fancied our chances, though the trial is difficult to win — we would have to survive four long, tough matches.

We started better than we had hoped. Not only did we survive the opening rounds, but Nickell, the reigning world champions, were knocked out by Robbins, an unfancied team from Chicago whom we would now play in the final.

I have to confess that we were soundly beaten. This was one of my disasters. You'll come up against a number of problems at various points in the auction — make up your mind what you would do at each stage before reading on. You pick up this hand with both sides vulnerable:

♠Q2 ♥AKQ ♦Q3 ♣K109876

You're playing a strong no trump. Would you open with the orthodox one club, or a slightly off-centre 1NT?

I opened one club. Your hand has great potential if partner has a club fit — a slam in clubs would be excellent facing:

♠A3 ♥75 ♦K9862 ♣A543

and with that hand partner would simply raise 1NT to 3NT. Partner responds with one diamond, giving you an awkward re-bid. Would you choose conservative two clubs, an aggressive three clubs, or perhaps one heart? Three clubs would be too much with a mediocre suit, and one heart runs risks. I chose the safe two clubs. Partner bids two spades, which is forcing to game. Would you now bid three clubs, 2NT, or 3NT?

3NT is correct, as it shows extra values, gets the hand off your chest, and allows partner to bid on if he wishes. The story might have ended there — except I couldn't bid 3NT, as we had an agreement that it showed a one-loser club suit. I had to bid 2NT — and so, for the moment, will you. Partner bids 3NT. Would you now pass, or show your extra values with a raise to 4NT? Remember that partner has shown a good hand with his bidding to date, while you have so far done nothing that you would not do with 11 points rather than 16.

I bid 4NT — not Blackwood, just a natural bid showing extra strength and inviting slam. Partner bids 5NT, putting the ball in your court. The bidding was:

You	Partner
1♣	1♦
2♣	2♠
2NT	3NT
4NT	5NT
?	

While the last four bids may look surreal to you, until now you have done nothing foolish, though you may not have agreed with all my actions. But this is the $64,000 question — to bid, or not to bid? Would you now pass, or accept partner's invitation with six clubs or 6NT?

I chose 6NT; this was my partner's hand:

♠KJ97 ♥J64 ♦AKJ10 ♣QJ.

We had plenty of tricks — but there was one slight problem, or rather two slight problems. What was more, left-hand opponent was on lead holding both of them, so he doubled and cashed out for minus 200 to our side.

Phoenix is a lonely place. ©

Olympic Games

Golden oar's four in a row

Mick Cleary at Lake Lanier

THE Challenge defined rather than intimidated. After a week of distractions, some farcical, others tragic, Steve Redgrave and Matthew Pinsent blocked out all interference to ride triumphantly to the line and into history.

It was Britain's first gold medal of the Games and Redgrave's fourth in succession. He becomes only the fourth Olympian ever to achieve such a feat. He stands now as a man apart in British sport.

Redgrave and Pinsent had to look deep within themselves to find the necessary resolve and will to withstand a late charge from the Australians, the form crew during the week. For all the technique, all the poundage in the gym, such victories often come down to elemental forces. Redgrave and Pinsent were dogs on the water, scrapping and snarling to protect their turf.

To casual observers the event may seem merely an untroubled burst of exertion, a demonstration of physical prowess. It is also much more than that. You need heart and fearsome drive to succeed, real guts to face down opponents.

Small wonder that when it was all over, when the clock showed that the defending champions had held on by just 0.93sec, the pair slumped over their oars. Pinsent was back up immediately, Redgrave, though, remained prostrate, racked by pain, relief, maybe a touch of sadness that it was all over. "I was knackered, absolutely knackered," said Redgrave, aged 34, who also has the unprecedented record of 10 major championships to his name.

It was a great way to finish, for this was Redgrave's last race. "I've had enough," he said. "This is definitely the end. If anyone sees me near a boat, will they please shoot me." Pinsent jokingly claimed that he would also walk away: "It's definitely enough for me if not for him."
— *The Observer*

Rich vein . . . Olympic champions Redgrave and Pinsent display their gold medals PHOTO MATTHEW ASHTON

Redgrave was later due to meet the 64-year-old Al Oerter, from Babylon, New Jersey, the former United States discus thrower, "president" of the immortals and the first of the four men to win gold medals at four successive Olympics, *write Guardian Reporters.*

Meanwhile in the other rowing competition, Britain's coxless four, with two previous gold medalists on board, had to settle for bronze in a nail-biting finish with 1.5sec covering the first three.

Rupert Obholzer, Jonny and Greg Searle and Tim Foster were sixth at 500 metres and opened the throttle after 1,000m. The 1992 Olympic champions from Australia were first and France second.

Elsewhere Jonathan Edwards won silver in the triple jump. He had two foul jumps, but then adjusted his run-up, a problem all season, and moved into third place with 17.13m. His next of 17.88m, his best this year, was enough for silver. "By chance I hit my rhythm; it was like an enlightenment," said Edwards, a committed Christian.

Roger Black stormed home in 44.31sec to finish just behind the favourite Michael Johnson in the 400m final. Johnson's time was an Olympic record at 43.49sec, and is the first of an expected double gold, in this and the 200m.

There was silver also for swimmer Paul Palmer in the men's 400m freestyle. He was pipped for gold by New Zealand's Danyon Loader. There were medals also for two other British swimmers — Graeme Smith picked up a bronze in the 1500m freestyle and Nick Gillingham in the 200m breaststroke.

Steve Smith, the 23-year-old Liverpool Harrier, saved his season's best for when it mattered most, clearing 2.35m for a bronze in high jump. "It was an awesome competition," he said, after hours of jumping. "It is a relief to have got a medal. This is just the best feeling."

Denise Lewis claimed a bronze by the narrowest of margins in a nerve-tingling finish to the heptathlon. She was ahead of Urszula Wlodarczyk as the athletes lined up for the final event, the 800m. She finished more than five seconds behind the Pole to beat her to a medal by just five points. The gold went to Ghada Shouaa, with a 6,780 total. She became the first Syrian winner of an Olympic title.

The biggest disappointment of the Games for Britain came when Linford Christie yielded his Olympic 100m title to Donovan Bailey of Canada. Christie got himself disqualified after making two false starts in the final.

Sally Gunnell could be facing the end of a golden athletics career after breaking down while defending the Olympic 400 metres hurdles title here last night.

On her 30th birthday, Gunnell hobbled to a halt in the semi-finals with a recurrence of an inflamed Achilles tendon. She received treatment from British team doctor Malcolm Brown and the foot was heavily strapped.

Cricket First Test: England v Pakistan

England's hopes collapse in a heap

Mike Selvey at Lord's

THE PAKISTAN cricket team has long been one fuelled on passion rather than on pragmatism, capable of touching stratospheric heights and plumbing the lowest depths — all within the same afternoon. They rely on force. But even by their standards, the tidal wave of adrenalin cricket that carried them to victory in the first Test on Monday was something special.

The match turned around during the course of one frenzied hour's cricket after lunch that saw David Lloyd's British Bulldog — the one that for the previous four hours and more, while Mike Atherton and Alec Stewart were putting together a second-wicket partnership of 154, had growled at the intruders — suddenly lose its teeth and roll over like a pet poodle.

The Mound Stand clock showed three minutes before two o'clock and the scoreboard beneath it 168 for one when the mayhem began with Atherton's dismissal. Sixty-one minutes later, Graham Thorpe was wandering back to the pavilion and the board read 186 for eight. Seven wickets had fallen for 18 runs in 75 balls. As collapses go, this was in the same class as Norman Wisdom's deckchair.

With the heart and soul knocked out of the England order, Pakistan then eased the pressure, allowing the last two wickets to add 57, before victory was achieved. No matter though: the damage had been done earlier, and although there were reports of thunder showers drifting in, Pakistan's decision to bat on for more than an hour in bad light on Saturday evening bought them time. Once the breach had been made, it was always under control and there were 27 overs still remaining when Ian Salisbury hooked at a bouncer from the Pakistan captain Wasim Akram and was caught behind after a spirited 40.

The win, by 164 runs, was only Pakistan's eighth against England, but significantly, their third on this ground. On the second occasion, four years ago, it had been Wasim and Waqar's last-ditch stand that had plucked victory from England when it had been theirs for the taking. Waqar was there again on Monday, surging in from the Pavilion end and adding three further wickets, including that of the hapless Graeme Hick, to that of Nick Knight on the previous afternoon. His tally of 4-85 gave him match figures of 8-154 — wonderful stuff on a slow pitch — and the man of the match award.

But this was a partnership. At the other end Mushtaq Ahmed had been plugging away. His was a tribute to persistence. From the moment in the first innings that he had Alec Stewart leg before wicket, he had sent down 49 overs without success. It simply could not last, and it did not. It was a decision, made at lunchtime on Monday, to go around the wicket that changed his fortune. In the space of 57 balls, Atherton had been caught at slip, Stewart taken at silly point, Ealham bowled behind his legs, Thorpe, unluckily, leg before, and Mullaly caught close in on the offside. Figures of 5-57 from 38 overs was magnificent bowling, and few would have argued had he — or indeed Inzamam-ul-Haq, who batted superbly — received the man of the match award instead.

Perhaps England had been seduced by the certainty with which Atherton and Stewart had negotiated the morning's play. Although Waqar had in effect been held in reserve, Mushtaq always posed difficult questions, and everyone knows Wasim's potential. It was, perhaps, Stewart who was the more impressive, however, because while we expect this sort of thing from Atherton, his partner has been teetering on the brink of Test match extinction.

Although his batting after Atherton's dismissal for 64 had taken on a more frenetic air, Stewart had played freely and confidently for 261 minutes before Mushtaq spun one out of the rough, which bounced from this thigh pad and touched his glove. But his 89 will reinforce his position in the side.

Pakistan 340 (Inzamam 148, Anwar 74, Mullaly 3-44) and 352 for 5 dec (Anwar 88, I Ahmed 76, Cork 3-86); **England** 285 (Thorpe 77, Younis 4-69, Ata 4-50) and 243 (Stewart 89, M Ahmed 5-57, Younis 4-85). **Pakistan won by 164 runs**

Sports Diary

Shiv Sharma

Shearer, the £15m Magpie

ALAN SHEARER became the world's most expensive footballer by moving from Blackburn Rovers to his home town club, Newcastle United, for a staggering £15 million. He was top scorer for England in Euro 96 and his name had been linked with a number of clubs — including Manchester United. But he opted for a five-year contract with the Magpies.

Shearer, who began his career at Southampton, moved to Blackburn in 1992 and got 34 league goals two seasons ago to lead them to their first championship for 81 years. He is the only player to have scored more than 100 Premiership goals.

Manchester United were certain that their bid, believed to be around £12 million, would be accepted by Shearer. But he chose Newcastle's higher offer.

DESPITE the disappointment over Shearer, Manchester United continued their summer signing spree last week, bringing the Dutch star Jordi Cruyff to Old Trafford from Barcelona — the fifth new arrival at the club this year. United have paid an initial fee of £800,000 for Cruyff to sign a four-year contract with the Premiership champions.

In comings and goings elsewhere, former Arsenal goalkeeper John Lukic returned to Highbury on a free transfer after six years with Leeds. He will be David Seaman's deputy. Taking Lukic's place at Leeds is Nigel Martyn, who comes to Elland Road from Crystal Palace for £2.25 million. Tottenham Hotspur paid £2 million for 25-year-old Danish midfielder Allan Nielsen, their first major signing of the summer. Another player leaving Blackburn will be striker Mike Newell. He is moving to Birmingham City for £775,000.

TEENAGER David Sales, the Northamptonshire batsman known to his teammates as Jumble, wrote himself into the record books on Saturday by hammering a double century on his county championship debut. Sales, an England Under-19 player, was the first person to achieve the feat in the competition's 106-year history. At 18 years and 237 days, he also became the youngest player to make a double century in first-class cricket in England. When Northamptonshire declared at 410 for 3 in their second innings — Sales was out for a duck in the first — against Worcestershire at Kidderminster, he was unbeaten with 210. The match, however, ended in a draw.

IAN McGeechan, the former Scotland back, has been appointed coach of the British Lions for an unprecedented third time. Next summer he will be assisted by former Lions' teammate Fran Cotton for the tour of South Africa.